THE Public Interest

NUMBER 12, SUMMER 1968, PRICE $1.50

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Robert Gilpin — A Rejoinder to Levitt

Economics and Public Policy
Harry G. Johnson *Carl Kaysen*
Mancur Olson, Jr.

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CONTENTS

Five Long Hot Summers and How They Grew	*Howard Hubbard*	3
The Urban Unease: Community vs. City	*James Q. Wilson*	25
"Shortcuts" to Social Change?	*Amitai Etzioni*	40
Toward a Modest Experiment in Cable Television	*Stephen White*	52
Economics and Public Policy		
I. The Economic Approach to Social Questions	*Harry G. Johnson*	68
II. Model-makers and Decision-makers: Economists and the Policy Process	*Carl Kaysen*	80
III. Economics, Sociology, and the Best of All Possible Worlds	*Mancur Olson, Jr.*	96
Discussion		
The Gap Is Not Technological	*Theodore Levitt*	119
Of Course the Gap's Not Really Technological	*Robert Gilpin*	125
When It Comes to the CRUNCH	*Geoffrey Taylor*	130
Current Reading		134
Contributors		118

THE PUBLIC INTEREST is published quarterly by National Affairs, Inc., and appears in Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter issues. Its office of publication is located at 404 Park Avenue South, New York, N. Y. 10016. Subscription price: $5.00 per year. Second class postage is paid at New York, N. Y. © 1968 by National Affairs, Inc.

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404 Park Avenue South, N. Y. 10016

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THE PUBLIC INTEREST *is sponsored by Freedom House as part of its educational program and as a contribution to—the public interest. But the views expressed in the magazine are to be attributed only to the authors and, where appropriate, the editors. Similarly, views expressed by Freedom House are not necessarily shared by the editors, contributors, or members of the publication committee.*

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Five long hot summers and how they grew

HOWARD HUBBARD

ON THE racial scene, speeches and behavior that would have been unthinkable five years ago, at the time of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birmingham campaign have become commonplace. The climate of the American racial conflict has escalated and actually sustained an inversion of values. The early nonviolent bargaining mode which featured moral suasion and dramatic appeals to conscience has given way to equally dramatic coercive threats of riot and violence.

By analyzing, as a series of moves in a bargaining process, the step-by-step escalatory progression by which this transformation took place, one can gain insight into some hidden mechanisms that determine the result. For example, the Birmingham and Mississippi moral-confrontation phase had a framework of game-like calculation not generally appreciated. The crucial part that provoking or conspicuously withholding violence played in the early nonviolent campaigns provides a valuable precedent for the situation that prevails in 1968, after the Report of the President's Commission on Civil Disorders and the assassination of Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. Perhaps if we re-examine—with some help from the insights of game theory—the stratagems, claims, bluffs, and threats that have gotten us where we are, we may better be able to negotiate (in both senses of the word) the present unacceptable state of affairs.

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Tell it like it was: Birmingham, 1963

The organized militant phase of the civil rights struggle coincides in most persons' minds with the series of long hot summers which began in Birmingham in the spring of 1963. In fact, however, Martin Luther King's Birmingham campaign was preceded by a less well-known effort in Albany, Georgia, in the summer and fall of 1962. Significantly, by Dr. King's own admission the Albany operation was a failure.

> When, in Albany, Georgia, in 1962, months of demonstrations and jailings failed to accomplish the goals of the movement, reports in the press and elsewhere pronounced nonviolent resistance a dead issue.
>
> There were weaknesses in Albany, and a share of the responsibility belongs to each of us who participated. However, none of us was so immodest as to feel himself master of the new theory. Each of us expected that setbacks would be a part of the ongoing effort. There is no tactical theory so neat that a revolutionary struggle for a share of power can be won merely by pressing a row of buttons. Human beings with all their faults and strengths constitute the mechanism of a social movement. They must make mistakes and learn from them, make more mistakes and learn anew. They must taste defeat as well as success, and discover how to live with each. Time and action are the teachers.
>
> When we planned our strategy for Birmingham months later, we spent hours assessing Albany and trying to learn from its errors.[1]

The implication of the passage quoted is that Albany really was a failure, but that "weaknesses" and "errors" uncovered there helped perfect the theory that was applied successfully in Birmingham. King nowhere gives explicit details of how his Birmingham strategy benefited from the Albany experience, but the lesson learned from Albany can be inferred from the following passage, in which "Bull" Connor's initial tactics are compared with those of Pritchett.

> Birmingham residents of both races were surprised at the restraint of Connor's men at the beginning of the campaign. True, police dogs and clubs made their debut on Palm Sunday, but their appearance that day was brief and they quickly disappeared. What observers probably did not realize was that *the Commissioner was trying to take a leaf from the book of Police Chief Laurie Pritchett of Albany. Chief Pritchett felt that by directing his police to be nonviolent, he had discovered a new way to defeat the demonstrations.* Mr. Connor, as it developed, was not to adhere to nonviolence long; the dogs were baying in kennels not far way; the hoses were primed. But that is another part of the story.[2]

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[1] Martin Luther King, Jr., *Why We Can't Wait* (New York: Signet Books, 1963), p. 43.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 69. Emphasis mine.

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Evidently the reason King failed in Albany was that Chief Pritchett used force rather than violence in controlling the situation,[3] that is, *he effectively reciprocated the demonstrator's tactics.* King's Birmingham innovation was pre-eminently strategic. Its essence was not merely more refined tactics, but the selection of a target city which had as its Commissioner of Public Safety "Bull" Connor, a notorious racist and hothead who could be depended on *not* to respond nonviolently.

When the demonstrations began, Connor was a lame duck, having been defeated by Albert Boutwell, a "moderate," in a run-off election April 2, 1963. Knowing that Connor's term would soon expire, eight Birmingham clergymen took newspaper space to ask, not unreasonably, that Dr. King desist until Boutwell had been given an opportunity. King's answer was his celebrated "Letter from a Birmingham Jail,"[4] which, though admirable as rhetoric, comprised a somewhat hawkish response to the ministers' proposals. King declined their suggestion that he negotiate forthwith, saying that nonviolent direct action must first "create such a crisis and foster such a tension" that meaningful negotiation would be assured. He also stated that "one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws," citing as an example the local parade ordinance, a deliberate breach of which had resulted in his incarceration.[5]

After eight days, Dr. King emerged from jail to initiate on April 20, a new operational phase which enlisted school-age children in large numbers and sought to "fill the jails." This tactic was gradually intensified until, on May 2, more than a thousand young demonstrators were jailed.

Finally, on Friday, May 3, "Bull" Connor "abandoned his posture of nonviolence." King's account is unfortunately not clear as to whether "some few spectators" who "reacted to the brutality of the policemen by throwing rocks and bottles" precipitated the employment of dogs and hoses or vice versa. In any event, pictures of the resulting violent confrontation, which culminated in the brutal use of high pressure hoses on the demonstrators, shocked and outraged the United States and the rest of the world on Saturday morning. This episode is at least superficially familiar to anyone who took an interest in the matter at the time, and most persons' curiosity concerning it has long since ceased.

---

[3] The riot control strategy that emerged during the riots which occurred in the wake of Dr. King's assassination essentially duplicates this technique. Troops in sufficient numbers dominate the situation without resort to firearms. Firearms are the equivalent in a riot environment of dogs, fire hoses, and cattle prods in the context of a nonviolent demonstration.

[4] *Ibid.*, Chapter 5.

[5] His conviction was appealed to and ultimately upheld by the Supreme Court, and Dr. King served a well-publicized five-day sentence in August 1967—reading William Styron's *Confessions of Nat Turner.*

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However, the events of the next three days, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday (May 5, 6, and 7) impart a curious off again/on again quality to the proceedings and, though quite significant, have seemingly gone unnoticed.

Dr. King tells in his book how, on Sunday afternoon, the Reverend Charles Billups led another massive march, proceeding down a Birmingham street across which Connor and his men had taken up positions, deployed their hoses, etc. When the marchers drew near, Reverend Billups "politely refused" Connors order to turn back, whereupon "Bull Connor whirled on his men and shouted: Dammit. Turn on the hoses."

Then, according to King, occurred "one of the most fantastic events of the Birmingham story." The marchers, many of whom had been on their knees, stood up and advanced. Connor's men fell back, "their hoses sagging uselessly in their hands," while several hundred Negroes marched past them without interference to hold a prayer meeting "as planned."

Now King's account differs in several important respects from *The New York Times* version. According to *The Times,* the demonstrators knelt to pray directly in front of Connor's "barricade," whereupon Reverend Phillips (*sic*) declaimed "Turn on your water, turn loose your dogs, we will stand here till we die." No such orders were forthcoming, however, and after an interval during which police made no attempt to disperse them, the demonstrators proceeded not toward the jail, their supposed goal, but to a nearby park where they held their prayer meeting.

Whichever version one accepts, the point is that Connor evidently apprehended the unwisdom of bowling over nonviolent demonstrators with high pressure hoses for a third straight day. The next day, Monday, one thousand more Negroes were jailed, 40 per cent of them juveniles. A Negro woman was photographed being held down by five white policemen. Dick Gregory was arrested. However, authorities announced their intention to use "no more force than necessary," and, as on Sunday, hoses were not employed. On Tuesday, "police and firemen drove hundreds of rioting Negroes off the streets with high pressure hoses . . . after 2,500 to 3,500 persons rampaged through the business district in two demonstrations." Thus provoked, Connor reverted to his original conspicuously oppressive and brutal fire-hose tactic, although a measure of restraint prevailed inasmuch as cattle prods and police dogs were not reintroduced. On Wednesday, a moratorium was declared on demonstrations, and negotiations began on Thursday.

Now there are several illuminating perspectives one can open up and many issues to examine in the light of the preceding accounts.

A moral and intellectual paradox is that the Albany campaign—where nonviolence was reciprocated—failed, whereas Birmingham

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—where violence was nonviolently provoked—was interpreted as a great success. The good guys vs. bad guys explanation that proved so satisfactory at the time seems ingenuous when one realizes that, despite their nonviolent label, the demonstrations had to provoke a violent response in order to succeed. According to Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., "the Attorney General three times counseled the Birmingham leaders not to force issues while Bull Connor was still in charge."[6] But after the conspicuous brutality of dogs, fire hoses, and cattle prods, no one cared to examine the fine structure of the game-like tactics and strategy that brought it about.

An advocate of nonviolent techniques might simply regard Birmingham as a more skillful and therefore successful application of "moral jujitsu," secure in the knowledge that the cause was ultimately just so that the rest was merely "tactics." But for an objective observer, the interesting questions are: Why didn't Connor inquire of Albany's Chief Pritchett concerning his methods? Why didn't Pritchett volunteer them? On the other hand, maybe he did and the answer is: "Bull" Connor didn't get his nickname for nothing. How, after the example of Albany, could sheriffs consistently fail to cope with King's tactic as most of them did?

The following three propositions are advanced as working hypotheses:

1. King's skill consisted mainly in his ability to *contrive*—in the best Machiavellian tradition—a situation in which he was the injured party (an interpretation quite inconsistent with the popular verdict at the time). He did not anticipate beforehand everything that this would entail. His tactics emerged in a series of existential command decisions.

2. Such a strategy depends for its success on certain gaps and discontinuities in communication. (If Connor had understood King's method earlier, he would have behaved differently—albeit hypocritically.)

3. Where public opinion arbitrates, sentiment rallies to the victim —which idea the victim may exploit, *as long as he does so discreetly.* To appreciate the last qualification is to appreciate some of the costs incurred by the Movement, now that riots sometimes appear instrumental and deliberate. To arrange to have violence visited upon oneself reflexively for the benefit of an influential audience is an exercise in public relations—but, to be effective, must not appear as such.

Birmingham left such a vivid sense of outrage hovering over the country that Negro leaders organized the March on Washington, which provided an outlet for the powerful resentment that was engendered during the latter part of the summer of 1963. The following spring witnessed the passage of the Civil Rights Bill of 1964. In

[6] *A Thousand Days* (New York: Houghton, 1965), p. 988.

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the interval after Birmingham, President Kennedy remarked to Dr. King: "Our judgment of Bull Connor should not be too harsh. After all, in his way, he has done a good deal for civil-rights legislation this year."[7]

1964—The COFO summer project

Nineteen sixty-four was the year of the COFO Summer Project in Mississippi and the year in which riots occurred for the first time in six Northern cities. As such, it was a year of transition, in which the earlier moral-confrontation phase overlapped the riots-as-a-weapon-or-threat phase that emerged after Watts.

The COFO project was a hybrid phenomenon, less of a moral confrontation than Birmingham, and more of a power play. COFO (Congress of Federated Organizations) was a loose *ad hoc* consortium for which established organizations such as the NAACP and the Urban League footed the bill, while SNCC provided organizing talent, energy, and a cutting edge. Having noticed that, in parts of Alabama and Mississippi, Negroes greatly outnumbered whites, SNCC theoreticians had in 1961 mounted a voter registration campaign which for three years had been frustrated by white intimidation, terror, and the threat of economic reprisal. The 1964 Summer Project, masterminded by a disillusioned SNCC staff, was presented as a massive effort to get voter registration off the ground with the aid of large numbers of vacationing white college students.

However, COFO's reasonable and liberal voter registration goal turned out to be a benign cover for a more ambitious and aggressive SNCC strategy. Let us focus first on this underlying strategy, and then on the circumstances surrounding the murder of the three civil rights workers, Schwerner, Chaney, and Goodman, on the assumption that the latter was the summer's key event.

Although the COFO Summer Project is in most respects adequately documented, reportage concerning it manifests a distinct split personality. On one level the COFO project consisted of three activities: voter registration, freedom schools, and community centers. The one thousand white student volunteers were hostages to assure federal supervision of this work.

However, according to Christopher Jencks, COFO was a "mere umbrella under which SNCC veterans run Mississippi's Summer Project."[8] The grand strategy was to provoke a massive federal intervention amounting to an occupation and a "second effort at reconstruction."[9]

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[7] King, *op. cit.*, p. 132.
[8] Christopher Jencks, *The New Republic*, August 22, 1964.
[9] *Ibid.*; see also Joseph Alsop in *Newsweek*, July 13, 1964.

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The not-so-covert goal appeared to be to provoke Klan vengeance upon the white participants to an extent that would necessitate federal intervention and, ultimately, martial law.[10] However, since this possibility was the subject of semi-public speeches to the volunteers at their Oxford, Ohio, training sessions, and of newspaper editorials, it was inevitably communicated to the Klan—which in turn warned its membership *not* to resort to violence.

The communication and decision process in this case is revealing. On Saturday, June 20, the first two hundred of approximately one thousand volunteers boarded their buses in Ohio for the trip to Mississippi. Michael Schwerner and his companions, having arrived on Friday, were busy making arrangements. A light aircraft was reported to have dropped leaflets over Pascagoula, Mississippi, Sunday afternoon with the word from the Klan: to paraphrase, "Refrain from violence, that is what they want." Nevertheless, as we now know, Schwerner, Goodman, and Chaney were brutally murdered that same evening. This presents the possibility of viewing the murders as a failure of communication among white racists, or a breakdown in Klan discipline. The parallel with "Bull" Connor's lapses into character during the Birmingham fracas is clear. An exercise of more than academic interest is to speculate on the outcome of a summer during which the Klan primly refrained from rising to the bait (i.e., doing what comes naturally, violence-wise) while Project workers went freely about their registration-teaching duties with no *cause célèbre* forthcoming. Or, if some such horrific deed was essential to the Project's goal—federal intervention—what if the conspirators had been convicted and executed? Either the first (the "preferred") or the second (the "just" outcome) would probably have undercut incentives for the Voting Rights Bill of 1965.

In an article in the December 1964 *Activist*, Staughton Lynd recalled a COFO strategy meeting in which James Forman of SNCC

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[10] *The Washington Post*, editorial, June 25, 1964: "The young project workers cannot claim they do not foresee the response their presence may provoke. . . . And some of the adult organizers not only expect mayhem but also see as one purpose of the operation—perhaps the major purpose—the compelling of Federal intervention in force, by marshals or troops, to quench the expected violence. . . . We cannot feel that the Federal Government now shows itself so apathetic, stupid, hypocritical or cowardly that it must be constrained to act by the threat of piling martyr's corpses on its doorstep. The President, the Department of Justice and its Civil Rights Division and even the Congress, on the eve of enacting America's most encompassing civil rights law, have not demonstrated such feebleness of purpose and such pusillanimity that their course of action must now be mortgaged to the decisions of a thousand collegians and a handful of ruthlessly righteous organization leaders. . . . [Let] the young people subject to the trenchant study they apply to other matters the question of their own competence as political strategists. Let them ask themselves with some humility what action, however fastidiously legal, they are entitled to take that could inflame passions and explode sparks in the political tinderbox of this menacing summer."

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(Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) modified the well-known Camus quotation—"neither victims nor executioners"—saying that (paraphrase) "until this is over there will be no pure victims, we will all be partly victims *and* executioners." This somber realization—particularly so for an apostle of nonviolence—apparently emerged after the fact.

In planning the 1965 Selma campaign, the sort of provocative ploy that had been undertaken as a reluctant last resort and only after a great deal of soul-searching in Birmingham was recognized to be a distasteful but necessary cost of doing business. At Selma, the permissible limits of several highly disciplined demonstrations were worked out in deals between the Selma Director of Public Safety, Wilson Baker, and Harry Boyt of the SCLC (Southern Christian Leadership Conference) staff. During one crucial prearranged confrontation, young demonstrators broke ranks and were chased by police, producing a melee superficially reminiscent of Birmingham for the television cameras. The SCLC had anticipated that they would lose "two or three" lives in the course of the Selma campaign, a prediction which proved sadly correct. Selma was the last of the classic Southern nonviolent campaigns, and was followed two months later by Watts.

From what has been said, the negotiating technique that characterized the civil rights movement in its classic militant period, 1962–1965, should be tolerably clear. The Birmingham drama was calculated to enlist the consciences of Northerners whose intervention could be mobilized the more easily as no immediate interest of theirs was involved. If a profoundly subjective, partly sentimental, partly manipulated, atmosphere had not prevailed at the time (which we are here seeking to penetrate), nonviolent techniques would not have worked, and much of the manifest progress would not have occurred. Where liberal opinion could not supervene to terminate a confrontation, it might go on and on, as with Fr. Groppi in Milwaukee.

In the COFO Mississippi operation, the moral capital that accrued to the movement after Birmingham was invested by SNCC in a maximizing scheme designed to produce an immediate political payoff by forcing a massive federal intervention that would overturn the existing order. When their audacious strategy failed to produce sufficiently radical change (recall the experience of the Mississippi Freedom Democrats of the 1964 convention), SNCC militants became bitter and retreated from their nonviolent ideal. (They were to re-emerge with the ambivalent slogan "Black Power" in 1966, which ambivalence was resolved in 1967 in favor of a violent ideology of urban guerrilla warfare.) By 1967, Mississippi Negro voter enrollment had begun to pay political dividends. This two-to-three-year lag between COFO's militant stimulus and the

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response (significant Negro enfranchisement) in Mississippi finds a Northern parallel: an attack on the problems of urban Negros seems to be lagging behind the recognition, circa 1966, of riots as a political instrument by about the same amount of time. Whether by the time visible progress occurs in the cities, the militants in their impatience will have gone on to more radical tactics, remains to be seen.

The foregoing suggests why the original nonviolent methods could not be successfully transplanted to the North, and indeed required increasing ingenuity to succeed in the South. The task of Southern demonstrators was to devise tactics that would cause the police, the Klan, etc. to act out conspicuously and in public their well-known role as oppressors of Negroes, even of Negroes whose behavior was impeccably nonviolent. This police stereotype was familiar to the audience beforehand—in fact, as in a traditional morality play, the whole story was known to them by heart. However, as time went on, the rules of the drama or game became clearer, and it became increasingly difficult to induce the police to "play the heavy," particularly while on camera.

There was also the problem of ensuring that Negroes would remain nonviolent. There were continual *sotto voce* implications of violence in the earlier nonviolent technique. Several times in his book, King recalled with satisfaction that his followers maintained their nonviolent discipline in the face of one or another extreme provocation, then acknowledged with evident regret that, for example, "Some few spectators, who had not been trained in the discipline of nonviolence, reacted to the brutality of the policemen by throwing rocks and bottles."[11] Without laboring the point, it ought to be obvious that this implicit threat-at-one-remove from undisciplined onlookers was not lost on the white power structure. (The 1968 Poor People's Campaign is a current case in point.)

Because this threat was always formulated as "accede to our reasonable demands or risk the (implied) consequences, it is the only moral thing to do," the threat was conveyed indirectly without any moral obloquy, this being shunted harmlessly off to some worthy surrogate, say, Malcolm X.

In the North, however, a strong religious orientation and tradition of submissive behavior were lacking, and the difficulty of keeping demonstrations within permissible bounds was keenly appreciated. Background violence was all too likely to spill over into the foreground, spoiling the effect.

Finally, there was the problem of the liberal "audience." Consider the following quotation by Robert Penn Warren dating from the first riots and commenting on the nonviolent era.

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[11] *Op. cit.*, p. 100.

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> Though Handlin approves of demonstrations and direct action in the South, where the Negro is deprived of the ballot, he sees that tactic as a mistake in the North, again "a misreading of the situation." But Wyatt T. Walker, lately of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, had already indicated the lack of realism in such a view: the Negro, he says, must "have a crisis to bargain with"—and he often has to create his crisis. This principle applies, North or South.[12]

The implication is that the same technique would work equally well in the North. However, along with altered roles for police and demonstrators, a third variable changed. In the South, Negro grievances were redressed by displacing onto a disinterested third party (public opinion, particularly Northern liberals) the indirect appeal of the Negro-as-victim. To similar events in the North the appropriate white response was, not a crusade fueled by righteous indignation, but personal guilt, so that this displacement mechanism was not available and there was no one to intercede. While these considerations do not invalidate the Negroes' need for "a crisis to bargain with," they do suggest why the crises began to assume a different form.

1964—Riots in six cities[13]

Nineteen sixty-four was an election year, and in view of the pressures generated in Mississippi and by the Goldwater candidacy, a disagreement developed among Negro leaders as to how best to negotiate the latter half of the summer. Rather than risk "cooling it" with an action program, as in the previous year's post-Birmingham March on Washington, the leadership opted for a moratorium on demonstrations—with militants Farmer (CORE) and Forman (SNCC) dissenting. Under the circumstances, the chain of riots which began in Harlem was not altogether unexpected. The new era arrived by what can only be termed the escalation route. On Saturday morning, July 12, there occurred the deliberate/panicky killing of an unarmed/knife-wielding Negro teenager by an off-duty police lieutenant. Next, there were protests and inflammatory leaflets. Monday evening, a street-corner speech by James Farmer culminated in a march on the local police station, which touched off disorders leading ultimately to full-fledged riots. Most of the riots in the overlapping chain that followed the Harlem riot grew out of a precipitating incident involving police. On the second day of the Harlem riot, Jesse Gray, erstwhile leader of the

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[12] From a review of Oscar Handlin's *Fire-Bell in the Night*, October 22, 1964, *The New York Review of Books*.

[13] Nominally, Harlem; the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn; Rochester, N. Y.; Paterson, N. J. (also Elizabeth and Jersey City); Chicago; Philadelphia.

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Harlem rent strike, called for "100 skilled black revolutionaries" who were ready to die "participating in guerrilla warfare." If such talk had any effect in prolonging the disturbance, or promoting arson, the results were too disorganized to leave any lasting impression. The consensus was then and still is that the 1964 riots were spontaneous outbursts of pent-up frustration, doubtless aggravated by the atrocities and outrages visited on Southern Negroes during the Birmingham and COFO campaigns. Recall that the fall 1964 FBI report on the summer's rioting concluded that the six ghetto riots were "not racial" because they were not deliberately planned with a political end in view, and lumped them with a Labor Day teenage rampage at Hampton Beach, New Hampshire, and one in Oregon!

It is obviously inappropriate to discuss strategy in connection with actions having no discernible purpose. But the riots had all sorts of intrinsic political implications, and how these gradually asserted themselves is interesting. How quickly the latent instrumental-coercive interpretation suggested itself was revealed in the phraseology employed in leaflets distributed by Brooklyn NAACP members during the later teenage phase of the Harlem conflagration: "COOL IT, BABY, Your Message Has Been Received." The riots-as-a-message attitude embodied in this quote was so rare as to be virtually imperceptible in accounts of the 1964 riots. Today it is inescapable.

The kind of behavior manifested in the spate of riots that followed Dr. King's assassination in the spring of 1968 was practically indistinguishable from that typical of the 1964 riots. What has changed is the accompanying attitudes and interpretation. It is not hard to follow the process by which this transformation was accomplished, which amounts to a kind of strategic dialogue among militant Black Nationalists. On-the-spot accounts of the 1964 Harlem riots reveal that as the initial complex blend of exultation and rage passed, a mood of foreboding and anticipated reaction emerged. (Compare the tone of the first-hand reports in the August 1964 black radical monthly, *Liberator*, with subsequent numbers, for example the November 1964 article, "No Final Solution—Yet.") It is obvious why the 1964 riots were for a while regarded even by many Negroes as an irretrievable disaster. The Goldwater-Johnson election was imminent and things were preternaturally quiet from September through November. There was talk among Negro leaders of a turn "from protest to politics," implying that the era of demonstrations was over. However the riots were obviously "spontaneous and unrehearsed," and whites still had the guilt and sympathy engendered by the outrages in Philadelphia, Mississippi, to expiate. Later, after Lyndon Johnson had inundated Barry Goldwater, it was noticed that large-scale Negro violence did not necessarily

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cause the sky to fall. The stage was set for Watts and some further thoughts on the subject of riots as a "message."

1965—Watts

The Watts riot had noticeable instrumental overtones: "soul brother" signs, deliberate selective destruction by fire of white-owned businesses, widespread reports of sniper activity (despite which no one was hit—in retrospect, the reports are called into question in that most were received after the National Guard arrived and began firing).

Nevertheless there is no doubt that the McCone Commission report was correct in denying a political or revolutionary basis to the Watts disturbance. For further proof of this verdict, one can consult the post-riot lead article "Watts, L.A.: A First Hand Report, Rebellion Without Ideology," in the September 1965 *Liberator*, which explicitly states that the riots lacked purpose, ideology, and organization.

However, the pendulum of Negro opinion that had swung in the direction of excuses, apologies, and doubts after the 1964 riots was beginning to swing very rapidly in the other direction by the time of Watts—at least among the militants. In the August 1965 *Liberator*, a commentary on the organization of the Deacons for Defense in Bogalusa, Louisiana, ended with the exhortation that "we *must* follow their example." The September issue contained the aforementioned "nonideological" interpretive report on Watts by two members of the Watts Preparedness Committee, along with an article entitled "Self-Defense" and an editorial containing the statement "Watts, Los Angeles, is our manifesto." It also carried an appreciative review of a book on guerrilla warfare, *The War of the Flea* by Robert Tabor, in which the reviewer Carlos Russell chided the author for having shrunk from applying a guerrilla warfare prescription to the plight of the Negro in the United States. The tone of the review suggests that the book awakened an interest that was quite new. In the November "Letters" column appeared a detailed reply to the review by the author, Robert Tabor. He quoted "Ché" Guevara to the effect that a precondition to successful revolution was that "all peaceful legal constitutional remedies must first be exhausted," suggesting that this had not yet been done. He went on to point out the virtual impossibility for a highly visible, greatly outnumbered minority, segregated into ghettos, to follow the classic "fish in the sea" guerrilla tactic. But he went on to suggest what they might do instead, which, since it describes fairly accurately what has been happening subsequently, is worth quoting. Mr. Tabor stated that "More Watts are coming" and went on to say that

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> I do not think that the Black Minority can win these battles, any more than it can win a civil war in the U.S. But it may be that they will achieve something, after all. It may be that they will sow so much fear and confusion and hurt so many pocketbooks, and create so great an embarrassment for Uncle Sam on the International Scene, and, finally, so shake and shock the passive majority, that in the end, out of sheer desperation the bankers and businessmen and politicians will say all right damn it—give them what they want. . . .

It was inevitable that, having been told that Watts was unplanned, unorganized, nonconspiratorial, etc.—the McCone Commission said there was "no real correlation between alleged consumer exploitation and destruction"—many people would ask themselves; What if riots *were* organized?

In the December 20, 1965, *The Nation*, there appeared "The Language of Watts," subtitled "Riots as a Weapon," a very sensitive attempt to fashion a rationale for the Watts experience, which however was not very successful. "Rioting is for the Negro in Watts a form of expression." Clearly though, this type of thinking had reached some sort of critical mass among militant blacks. Riots no longer seemed unthinkable. The question then became: Is there any way to convert them into political power?

Spring 1966—Riots as a weapon?

During the spring of 1966 the idea that riots were "weapons"[14] and "rebellions"[15] began to be publicized and to gain popular acceptance. Despite the authoritative ring of its title, "Violence Is Necessary," an article in the March 1966 *Liberator*[16] indicates that black militants were just beginning to think about the subject. The "weapon" and "rebellion" characterizations of Watts were ex post facto rationalizations.

However, beyond this point one should begin to think of the developing situation in terms of strategic interaction.

There is a sense in which the game-theoretical phrase, "rationality of irrationality," can shed considerable light on the political effect of riots. Those not acquainted with this concept can get some sense of what it usually means (as distinguished from the way we are defining it here) from another paragraph in *The New York*

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[14] Dr. Frederick J. Hacker, quoted in *The New York Times*, May 22, 1966. "What must be understood by the rest of America is that, for the lower-class Negro, riots are not criminal, but are a legitimate weapon in a morally justified civil war. For the ghetto-Negro in the second half of the 20th Century, anything —even a new American revolution—is better than being invisible."

[15] Bayard Rustin, "The Watts Manifesto and the McCone Report," *Commentary*, March 1966.

[16] Donald W. Jackson, March 1966, p. 6.

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Times article quoted in footnote 14. "One Negro businessman, certain that rioters in the past were hoodlums trying to keep from going to work, displayed a pistol and a quart bottle of whiskey—'I'll get as drunk and as crazy as they get to protect my store.'"

A case can be made for the proposition that the less instrumental and planned a riot appears, the less backlash there is. A convincingly irrational outburst does not inspire a deterrent white counterthreat, but something nearer sympathy. ("Forgive them O' Lord, for they know not what they do.") Nevertheless, rather than excusing riots on such sociologically justified grounds as youth, poverty, and class values, these factors were after due consideration subordinated to race and in favor of a rationale of riots as conscious political acts.[17] The evidence for this was sparse indeed, but the logic expressed in the Walker quote (i.e., the need for a "crisis to bargain with") asserted itself irresistibly and the claims were made. In a sense, the advent of the riots was a less significant event than the promulgation of this doctrine, which amounted to a conscious strategic choice.

But converting the riot threat into political power proved just as slow and agonizing as the earlier nonviolent campaigns.

The justification for focusing on this aspect of an admittedly many-dimensioned conflict is that, in retrospect, it has proved to be one of those waves of the future. By 1968 a survey of Negro attitudes[18] would show a substantial positive response to the question, "Is Violence Necessary?," particularly among the prime riot population: young Negro males in Northern cities. Many Negroes were arriving at the conclusion militant intellectuals had advanced two years earlier. *It took a year and a half for militant black intellectuals to formulate the riot "message" themselves. It would take two years more for their self-fulfilling prophesies of 1966 to be ratified by the rank and file.*

In 1966 hopes raised by the Great Society programs had not yet been dashed by the Vietnam involvement, and recollections of Martin Luther King's nonviolent successes were still fresh; a residuum of good will lingered. While a nucleus of Black Nationalist desperados might have been found to conduct terrorist incidents along the lines of the Algerian revolt, given the prevailing climate of opinion they would merely have succeeded in isolating themselves. Indeed, an abortive foray might have inoculated their constituents against radicalization. This was the meaning of the Guevara precondition quoted by Tabor.

Under such circumstances, given a militant disposition, what could one do? Well, one could organize, proselytize, and advertise

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[17] See notes 15 and 16 and *Life*, July 10, 1966.
[18] *Fortune*, January 1968.

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one's wares, even if the product was by no means ready for the market.

According to Professor Thomas C. Schelling, it is the *threat* of violence, not violence itself, that gets one what one wants. With a vivid enough imagination, in areas where widespread ignorance prevails, one may be able to erect a creditably threatening façade of potential guerrilla warfare, even though carrying out the threat might be self-defeating and therefore irrational. Strictly speaking, this would seem to be a bluff. But none of this is sufficiently calculable or controllable to be so calmly dismissed. Besides, if someone has a reputation for being pretty mad already, who is to say how rational he will be? Furthermore, sufficiently bellicose talk creates a crisis atmosphere which increases the likelihood that incidents will escalate—a form of "brinkmanship" that increases the risk of a shared disaster that no one would deliberately initiate.

As with thermonuclear war, no one would deliberately initiate a clash they know would lead to mutual disaster. But one may maneuver in a way that increases the risk that suspected irrational factors will get out of hand. This is another example of "the rationality of irrationality." Does it not seem passing strange that while riots were believed to be pointless and irrational, people were relatively complacent about them, but that when they began to appear deliberate everyone feared they might get out of control?

Summer 1966—Long, but not so hot

In one respect, 1966 was the most interesting summer of all. As we have seen, in terms of what was being written and said, it promised to be the longest, hottest, most destructive summer to date. But in terms of actual riots, it was anomalously less violent than one would have been led to expect by extrapolating the trend of the three preceding years.[19] An early straw in the wind had been a reshuffle in the SNCC high command which occurred in the early spring. John Lewis, who had been identified since the beginning of SNCC with nonviolence as a "philosophy" and a "way of life," was voted out in favor of Stokely Carmichael who was on record as favoring nonviolence "as a tactic," that is, only for as long as it worked, being prepared to renounce it pragmatically if an alternative approach looked more promising. Under Carmichael, SNCC

[19] In terms of disturbances that left a lasting national impression. This interpretation seems to correspond with the average person's recollected impressions, which apparently retain only memorable, i.e., major, riots. That about twice as many small-to-medium disturbances occurred in 1966 as in either 1964 or 1965 seems to have gone unperceived except by specialists and police. As the Report of the President's Commission of Civil Disorders said of the 1967 riots, most of the disorders would have received little or no national attention as "riots" had the nation not been sensitized by the more serious outbreaks.

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formally and deliberately disassociated itself from the civil rights movement's traditional commitment to nonviolence, taking up a position on the leftward militant fringe. (A virtually identical leftward shift was repeated in 1967, Rap Brown taking over from Carmichael with the latter on his way to Havana and Hanoi.) CORE, when it elected Floyd McKissick, also moved some distance leftward by refusing to denounce categorically the previous year's Watts riots. The racial situation picked up an ominous head of steam through the month of May. The July 10, 1966 issue of *Life* magazine provided a forum for what is still one of the more detailed and concrete and therefore menacing threats of organized urban guerrilla warfare in the black ghettos of Northern cities.

However, on June 6 James Meredith, who had started on a lone trek from Memphis to Natchez—guarded by local police who were in turn supervised by the FBI—was shot. He was first reported dead, then critically wounded. The outraged reaction was instantaneous and acute. Galvanized by the Meredith incident, the conservative Negro leadership quickly organized an extended march along the route Meredith was to have taken. The march lasted almost a month, pursuing a leisurely pace and taking time for detours off the original itinerary. Meredith's injuries proved not to be serious, so that he was able to rejoin the march after two weeks, well before it terminated. The interesting facet to the affair was not that the conservative Negro leadership chose to make it the occasion of an elaborate protest march—the incident could hardly have been better designed if it had been custom made—but the alacrity with which Stokely Carmichael and Floyd McKissick, after having gone to some pains to achieve militant, even intransigent, postures for themselves and their organizations, rejoined the responsible old-line leaders in making much of Meredith's largely symbolic trauma. If Meredith had been killed, such a full-blown response would have been quite appropriate; as it happened though, how much one wanted to make of it was to a considerable extent optional. If one construes the march as something of an escape valve or diversion—not unlike the 1963 March on Washington in this regard—then a truly radical Carmichael would have exploited it in the Northern urban ghettos where he could doubtless have stirred up an unprecedented furor. That Carmichael, King, McKissick, and A. Philip Randolph were shown, arms linked, collaborating on a chorus of "We Shall Overcome" was a critical index of the degree of seriousness in Carmichael's earlier declaration of war. (Noticing this, one prominent black militant accepted—as had Carmichael—an invitation to a "Civil Rights Conference" at Hudson Institute with the remark: "I've got to talk to Stokely, he's rocking the boat the wrong way.")

Although there were five fairly serious racial disturbances during

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the summer of 1966, one had the distinct impression of coasting through the summer poised on the brink of disaster. The amount of communication involved—or lack of it—was striking. Until late June, the Johnson Administration failed utterly to acknowledge the various threatening portents. (The black radical quoted above also said, regarding the same Hudson Institute Conference, "I don't know if my message has been received," apparently believing that some participants would relay his lurid warnings to the Establishment.)

The emotional aftermath of the Meredith affair seemed to linger until about the end of July. Late in July, Vice President Humphrey gave a speech[20] in which he allowed as how he didn't much blame young ghetto-dwelling Negroes for rioting, saying he would probably "lead a mighty good revolt" himself if he had their problems. (This sentiment was followed at the distance of a few weeks with a more severe, relatively reactionary speech, "No matter how bad things are, breaking the law is never a solution.") In August, several interesting developments occurred. One was an extraordinary series of columns by Joseph Alsop, which he began by quoting from the General Confession, "We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done," proceeding then to detail how Judgment Day was at hand in the Negro urban ghettos. Another was a series of hearings begun by Senators Ribicoff and Robert Kennedy which effectively, and at some length, took cognizance of the Negro grievance—if not in behalf of the Administration then at least in behalf of the legislative branch.

As it happened, August came and went without the expected large-scale disasters. In September, when the summer was technically at an end, Stokely Carmichael aggravated a small but well-publicized conflict in Atlanta during which, among other things, the mayor was obliged to leap from an automobile atop which he had been trying to speak.

One can conceive of the Meredith incident at the beginning of June and the Carmichael episode in September as parentheses delimiting the bounds of an otherwise curiously uneventful summer.

If this is so, then—although it can't be proved—it seems probable that the considerable apprehension evident during the summer of 1966 was more a result of what the militants *said* (the various manifestos) than what they *did* (which was relatively mild). From this experience must have emerged an appreciation that it is not so much violence but the threat of violence that influences an adversary and obtains political ends, which would account for the hyperviolent verbal display put on by Carmichael and Brown in 1967.

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[20] *The New York Times*, July 19, 1966.

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1967—Rhetoric and riots

It was suggested above that 1966 demonstrated that an eloquent threat can be comparable in its effect to actual violence. Whatever the inspiration for it, the strategic innovation of 1967 was the extravagant behavior of Stokely Carmichael and Rap Brown, who, starting where the spring 1966 "just war" proclamations left off, escalated the riot threat beyond the limits of credibility. While Brown kept the home fires burning verbally, Carmichael traveled to Havana, Hanoi, and Moscow, incorporating the dogmas of Frantz Fanon, Castroite anti-American elements, and the Viet Cong (the enemy of my enemy is my friend) guerilla precepts into a "Third World *Uber Alles*" mélange. A surrealistic aura has surrounded this episode in retrospect because of the Department of Justice's willingness to let bygones be bygones, rather than to martyr Carmichael and his correspondingly equable demeanor.

Although there is no way of determining objectively the effect of these threatening gestures, the intent behind them is reasonably clear: leave no stone unturned in creating the most threatening posture imaginable.

Two assumptions underly the following account: The extravagant speeches and behavior of Carmichael and Brown amplified the psychological effect of the 1967 riots, while the riots—and especially the reports of organized guerrilla warfare—lent credibility to their rhetoric in a sort of regenerative symbiosis. The heightened sense of urgency that emerged in 1967 was therefore inspired as much by nihilist rhetoric and threats of urban guerrilla warfare as by actual riots.

August 1967's unprecedented level of concern was stimulated by the joint action of several factors. Not just by the quantity of riot violence, for example, but more importantly by the pattern of its occurrence. The summer's racial heat began early with a succession of incidents through June and the first half of July, at which point Newark exploded. Newark had hardly cooled down when Detroit erupted. So, at the beginning of August, with the summer only half over, one perceived a nascent trend which if extrapolated was reason for serious concern. But, with the exception of New Haven, the rioting eased precipitately after Detroit, as if everyone sensed that the point had gotten across.[21]

Press reports suggest that the Newark disturbance was partly a reaction to police harshness, but that Detroit's enlightened hands-off

[21] Dick Gregory said that other cities should "thank Detroit," because comparable violence would have had to occur elsewhere, if not there. This sounds as if a sort of cumulative quota had to be met one way or another to achieve a necessary effect.

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policy permitted things to get out of hand there by default. A police shift change in Detroit, shortly after the precipitating incident, permitted looting to spread, after which police were increasingly outnumbered by looters who knew there were orders not to fire. A disconcerting aspect of Detroit was that it contrasted so markedly with poorer communities such as Newark, and it was rumored that affluent middle-class Negroes participated for ideological reasons. This implied a race-oriented political basis for the riots that the usual economic solutions (jobs, housing, education) might not dissipate. The riot in New Haven tended to support this surmise. After Detroit the wild extremist rhetoric of H. Rap Brown and Stokely Carmichael began to assume a certain ominous plausibility.

Nevertheless, the prima facie case for organized terrorism was sufficiently weak in Detroit for J. Anthony Lukas in an early article[22] to discount it almost entirely. Later, participants came forward to enhance the signal-to-noise ratio as it were, and make sure that "Whitey" would "get the message."

Probably the message (patterns of systematic burning and sniping) embodied in the Detroit riot would have emerged almost as clearly from the Watts riot, given this kind of assistance and sufficiently sensitized investigators. In any event, considering the nature of the medium, it is certainly more efficient to call attention to the latent message in this way than to escalate terrorist activity to an unambiguous level.

Actually, in objective terms of physical damage and fatalities, the two standard indices, Detroit was only marginally worse than Watts. Evidently, the specter of urban guerrilla warfare (made credible by a combination of immoderate words and conservative deeds) evoked a level of establishment concern that would have required any number of old-style "inadvertent" Harlem-Watts-type riots to achieve. In this sense, 1967 marked somewhat more of a qualitative escalation than a quantitative one, which in strictly economic terms constitutes a victory of sorts for the rioters. That is, augmenting one's acts with threats amounts to an economy of means.

Malcolm X once told a middle-of-the-road Negro leader that without pressure from the extremists the moderates would get nowhere. Carrying this insight to its logical conclusion, one arrives at the far-out strategy that has recommended itself to Carmichael and Brown. The more extreme, the better.

But if the impression Detroit made was due in large part to the effects of the extreme rhetoric and behavior of Rap Brown and Stokely Carmichael, then other long-run implications need to be considered.

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[22] *The New York Times*, magazine, August 27, 1967.

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That the militant aggregate threat posture would come to employ a high ratio of violent words to violent deeds is understandable, first because that is the path of least resistance. Talk is cheap, especially compared to riots. Ghetto Negroes who have experienced one serious riot are seldom enthusiasts for another. Also, deeds are irrevocable in a way that words are not. For example, when the Vietnam war ends, a cloud of rhetoric can be dissipated relatively easily; not so the effects of urban terror and assassination. This supports the idea that, in 1967, verbal hyperbole not only magnified, but to a significant extent compensated for the relative restraint of riot violence. Leaving aside the possible negative effects and future costs, one reaches the paradoxical conclusion that to the extent hyperbolic threats augment an action strategy, they are conservative. Other things being equal, alternative approaches would tend to require more overt violence to force federal acknowledgment[23] of the connection between riots and the Negro predicament.

Riots, bargaining, politics

In 1968 the pressure—the political influence—generated by the riot threat is developed through two interdependent mechanisms which are worth distinguishing analytically (in the public mind they run inextricably together).

One mechanism is riots as defined by the President's Riot Commission: "racial" but not "interracial," that is, Negroes rioting against such "symbols of white authority" as property and the police, but not against white people per se. On the evidence of attitude surveys and of what happened after the death of Martin Luther King, it is apparent that the Negro mood has reached a pitch of dissatisfaction that meets the Tabor precondition for widespread acquiescence in such violence. But the special "property, not people" character of the riots, and their tendency to be confined to Negro neighborhoods, has meant that the white majority could afford to be relatively tolerant of them. It is an open question as to whether these restrained riots, even if they occurred frequently and in large numbers, would cause the bankers and businessmen to say "all right, dammit—give them what they want," as Mr. Tabor suggested. The riots work a terrible hardship on the older (nonrioting) solid citizens of the ghetto, and there simply might not be enough ignitible ghettos to do the job.

Which points to the second mechanism: the more-or-less credible threat of urban guerrilla warfare. This is the "civil war" which Mr. Tabor declared the Negro could not "win." It was suggested above

[23] Signified by the appointment of the Commission on Civil Disorders to decode the riot message.

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that such a threat was therefore irrational, but one which was nevertheless made credible in 1967. It was this threat that accounted for the high level of concern among influential whites, and indeed for the appointment of the Riot Commission. (This exercise in brinkmanship parallels the United States-Soviet threats of thermonuclear war over Berlin and Cuba, which though they may be irrational are taken very seriously.)

It is interesting to see how the Riot Commission's conclusions in this area dovetailed with the militants' tactics (tact?) to preserve the political advantages and eliminate the mutual disadvantages that such undeniably dangerous expedients entail. The Commission was directed by the President to investigate the extent to which the riots were planned or organized. They reported that they "found no evidence that all or any of the disorders or the incidents that led to them were planned or directed by any organization or group." This formulation does not speak directly to the question of whether some of the activity in the later stages of, say, the Detroit riot showed signs of organization. It was never alleged that entire riots were planned and deliberately initiated, only that patterns of organized activity were sometimes discernible once one had started. Since there were only faint objective traces of such activity, pointed up retroactively by shadowy militant claims, the Commission was surely wise to ignore them. To have acknowledged evidence of deliberate intent would have defined a conscious challenge which would have ensured bitter opposition to its main recommendations (police restraint, massive economic programs).

The discretion with which the militants asserted their threat, and the fact that the Commission failed to acknowledge it while acting (in the urgency of its recommendations) as though it had received the "message," saves face all around. It supplies an admittedly illogical "have your cake and eat it too" element which may be necessary if we are to break out of the "we can't reward riots" vicious circle.

The strategic implications of the Commission's recommendation that alternatives be found to the use of deadly force in controlling riots are quite profound. In one sense, it only corrects an asymmetry in the bargaining position of the rioters, who have showed remarkably little disposition to injure white persons as compared to white property. What it really does, though, is transform the conflict from a matter of life and death to one of dollars and cents. You don't shoot at us, we won't shoot at you. It minimizes the likelihood that a degenerate, downward spiral of violent reprisals could occur, which is the really mortal danger that has hovered over the conflict. The price in economic terms could of course become quite high if the authorities could not muster sufficient force to control the situation nonviolently, so that looters were in effect given a free ride and were able to exploit this fact massively. If the rule that says police

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are to fire only in reply to snipers (or perhaps arsonists, too), is observed, then the overwhelming majority of rioters would not be threatened.

The increased costs ("reparations" in the form of loot, the expense of the manpower necessary to police riots without resorting to deadly force, the enormous social costs in terms of disrespect for law and order) of this tacit agreement to bargain nonviolently might make the funding of Great Society programs look more attractive to the white majority. If looters take too great advantage, pressure to rescind the prohibition on deadly force would obviously rise. The situation is still one of mutual deterrence, "brinkmanship" or "chicken," but one with a presumption in favor of an economic rather than a violent bargaining mode. How this will work itself out is unpredictable; in any bargain the outcome is indeterminate. But given the amazing ingenuity and restraint demonstrated during the preceding five years, the prospect for a businesslike negotiated settlement appears good.

Perhaps the greatest hidden cost of our strained racial situation is the generation of young Negroes who have come to associate power with violence. The lesson of the summer of 1968, at home as in Vietnam, must be that there are stringent limits on what one can accomplish politically with violence. (Actually, this was the original lesson of "Bull" Connor and Birmingham.) Having discovered by experience the limits of their commitment to nonviolence, it is highly desirable that militants—black and white—confront pragmatically the political consequences of their romantic infatuation with violence.

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The urban unease: community vs. city

JAMES Q. WILSON

ONE of the benefits (if that is the word) of the mounting concern over "the urban crisis" has been the emergence, for perhaps the first time since the subject became popular, of a conception of what this crisis really means, from the point of view of the urban citizen. After a decade or more of being told by various leaders that what's wrong with our large cities is inadequate transportation, or declining retail sales, or poor housing, the resident of the big city, black and white alike, is beginning to assert his own definition of that problem—and this definition has very little relationship to the conventional wisdom on the urban crisis.

This common man's view of "the urban problem," as opposed to the elite view, has several interesting properties. Whereas scholars are interested in poverty, this is a national rather than a specifically urban problem; the common man's concern is with what is unique to cities and especially to large cities. Racial discrimination deeply concerns blacks, but only peripherally concerns whites; the problem that is the subject of this article concerns blacks and whites alike, and intensely so. And unlike tax inequities or air pollution, for which government solutions are in principle available, it is far from clear just what, if anything, government can do about the problem that actually concerns the ordinary citizen.

This concern has been indicated in a number of public opinion

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surveys, but, thus far at least, the larger implications of the findings have been ignored. In a poll of over one thousand Boston homeowners that I recently conducted in conjunction with a colleague, we asked what the respondent thought was the biggest problem facing the city. The "conventional" urban problems—housing, transportation, pollution, urban renewal, and the like—were a major concern of only 18 per cent of those questioned, and these were expressed disproportionately by the wealthier, better-educated respondents. Only 9 per cent mentioned jobs and employment, even though many of those interviewed had incomes at or even below what is often regarded as the poverty level. *The issue which concerned more respondents than any other was variously stated—crime, violence, rebellious youth, racial tension, public immorality, delinquency. However stated, the common theme seemed to be a concern for improper behavior in public places.*

For some white respondents this was no doubt a covert way of indicating anti-Negro feelings. But it was not primarily that, for these same forms of impropriety were mentioned more often than other problems by Negro respondents as well. And among the whites, those who indicated, in answer to another question, that they felt the government ought to do *more* to help Negroes were just as likely to mention impropriety as those who felt the government had already done too much.

Nor is this pattern peculiar to Boston. A survey done for *Fortune* magazine in which over three hundred Negro males were questioned in thirteen major cities showed similar results. In this study, people were not asked what was the biggest problem of their city, but rather what was the biggest problem they faced as individuals. When stated this generally, it was not surprising that the jobs and education were given the highest priority. What is striking is that close behind came the same "urban" problems found in Boston—a concern for crime, violence, the need for more police protection, and the like. Indeed, these issues ranked *ahead* of the expressed desire for a higher income. Surveys reported by the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice showed crime and violence ranking high as major problems among both Negro and white respondents.

The failure of community

In reading the responses to the Boston survey, I was struck by how various and general were the ways of expressing public concern in this area. "Crime in the streets" was *not* the stock answer, though that came up often enough. Indeed, many of the forms of impropriety mentioned involved little that was criminal in any serious sense—rowdy teenagers, for example, or various indecencies (lurid

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advertisements in front of neighborhood movies and racy paperbacks in the local drugstore).

What these concerns have in common, and thus what constitutes the "urban problem" for a large percentage (perhaps a majority) of urban citizens, is *a sense of the failure of community.* By "community" I do not mean, as some do, a metaphysical entity or abstract collectivity with which people "need" to affiliate. There may be an "instinct" for "togetherness" arising out of ancient or tribal longings for identification, but different people gratify it in different ways, and for most the gratification has little to do with neighborhood or urban conditions. When I speak of the concern for "community," I refer to a desire for the observance of standards of right and seemly conduct in the public places in which one lives and moves, those standards to be consistent with—and supportive of—the values and life styles of the particular individual. Around one's home, the places where one shops, and the corridors through which one walks there is for each of us a public space wherein our sense of security, self-esteem, and propriety is either reassured or jeopardized by the people and events we encounter. Viewed this way, the concern for community is less the "need" for "belonging" (or in equally vague language, the "need" to overcome feelings of "alienation" or "anomie") than the concerns of any rationally self-interested person with a normal but not compulsive interest in the environment of himself and his family.

A rationally self-interested person would, I argue, take seriously those things which affect him most directly and importantly and over which he feels he can exercise the greatest influence. Next to one's immediate and particular needs for shelter, income, education, and the like, one's social and physical surroundings have perhaps the greatest consequence for oneself and one's family. Furthermore, unlike those city-wide or national forces which influence a person, what happens to him at the neighborhood level is most easily affected by his own actions. The way he behaves will, ideally, alter the behavior of others; the remarks he makes, and the way he presents himself and his home will shape, at least marginally, the common expectations by which the appropriate standards of public conduct in that area are determined. How he dresses, how loudly or politely he speaks, how well he trims his lawn or paints his house, the liberties he permits his children to enjoy—all these not only express what the individual thinks is appropriate conduct, but in some degree influence what his neighbors take to be appropriate conduct.

These relationships at the neighborhood level are to be contrasted with other ways in which a person might perform the duties of an urban citizen. Voting, as a Harvard University colleague delights in pointing out, is strictly speaking an irrational act

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for anyone who does not derive any personal benefit from it. Lacking any inducement of money or esteem, and ignoring for a moment the sense of duty, there is for most voters no rational reason for casting a ballot. The only way such an act would be reasonable to such a voter is if he can affect (or has a good chance to affect) the outcome of the election—that is, to make or break a tie. Such a possibility is so remote as to be almost nonexistent. Of course, most of us do vote, but primarily out of a sense of duty, or because it is fun or makes us feel good. As a way of influencing those forces which in turn influence us, however, voting is of practically no value.

Similarly with the membership one might have in a civic or voluntary association; unless one happens to command important resources of wealth, power, or status, joining such an organization (provided it is reasonably large) is not likely to affect the ability of that organization to achieve its objectives. And if the organization *does* achieve its objectives (if, for example, it succeeds in getting taxes lowered or an open occupancy law passed or a nuisance abated), nonmembers will benefit equally with members. This problem has been carefully analyzed by Mancur Olson in *The Logic of Collective Action*[1] in a way that calls into serious question the ability of any organization to enlist a mass following when it acts for the common good and gives to its members no individual rewards. Some people will join, but because they will get some personal benefit (the status or influence that goes with being an officer, for example), or out of a sense of duty or, again, because it is "fun." As a way of shaping the urban citizen's environment, however, joining a large civic association is not much more rational than voting.

Controlling the immediate environment

It is primarily at the neighborhood level that meaningful (i.e., potentially rewarding) opportunities for the exercise of urban citizenship exist. And it is the breakdown of neighborhood controls (neighborhood self-government, if you will) that accounts for the principal concerns of urban citizens. When they can neither take for granted nor influence by their actions and those of their neighbors the standards of conduct within their own neighborhood community, they experience what to them are "urban problems"—problems that arise directly out of the unmanageable consequences of living in close proximity.

I suspect that it is this concern for the maintenance of the neighborhood community that explains in part the overwhelming prefer-

[1] Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965.

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ence Americans have for small cities and towns. According to a Gallup Poll taken in 1963, only 22 per cent of those interviewed wanted to live in cities, 49 per cent preferred small towns, and 28 per cent preferred suburbs. (Only among Negroes, interestingly enough, did a majority prefer large cities—perhaps because the costs of rural or small town life, in terms of poverty and discrimination, are greater for the Negro than the costs, in terms of disorder and insecurity, of big-city life.) Small towns and suburbs, because they are socially more homogeneous than large cities and because local self-government can be used to reinforce informal neighborhood sanctions, apparently make the creation and maintenance of a proper sense of community easier. At any rate, Americans are acting on this preference for small places, whatever its basis. As Daniel Elazar has pointed out, the smaller cities are those which are claiming a growing share of the population; the largest cities are not increasing in size at all and some, indeed, are getting smaller.

A rational concern for community implies a tendency to behave in certain ways which some popular writers have mistakenly thought to be the result of conformity, prejudice, or an excessive concern for appearances. No doubt all of these factors play some role in the behavior of many people and a dominant role in the behavior of a few, but one need not make any such assumptions to explain the nature of most neighborhood conduct. In dealing with one's immediate environment under circumstances that make individual actions efficacious in constraining the actions of others, one will develop a range of sanctions to employ against others and one will, in turn, respond to the sanctions that others use. Such sanctions are typically informal, even casual, and may consist of little more than a gesture, word, or expression. Occasionally direct action is taken—a complaint, or even making a scene, but resort to these measures is rare because they invite counterattacks ("If that's the way he feels about it, I'll just show him!") and because if used frequently they lose their effectiveness. The purpose of the sanctions is to regulate the external consequences of private behavior—to handle, in the language of economists, "third-party effects," "externalities," and "the production of collective goods." I may wish to let my lawn go to pot, but one ugly lawn affects the appearance of the whole neighborhood, just as one sooty incinerator smudges clothes that others have hung out to dry. Rowdy children raise the noise level and tramp down the flowers for everyone, not just for their parents.

Because the sanctions employed are subtle, informal, and delicate, not everyone is equally vulnerable to everyone else's discipline. Furthermore, if there is not a generally shared agreement as to appropriate standards of conduct, these sanctions will be inadequate to correct such deviations as occur. A slight departure from a norm is set right by a casual remark; a commitment to a different

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norm is very hard to alter, unless of course the deviant party is "eager to fit in," in which case he is not commited to the different norm at all but simply looking for signs as to what the preferred norms may be. Because of these considerations, the members of a community have a general preference for social homogeneity and a suspicion of heterogeneity—a person different in one respect (e.g., income, or race, or speech) may be different in other respects as well (e.g., how much noise or trash he is likely to produce).

Prejudice and diversity

This reasoning sometimes leads to error—people observed to be outwardly different may not in fact behave differently, or such differences in behavior as exist may be irrelevant to the interests of the community. Viewed one way, these errors are exceptions to rule-of-thumb guides or empirical generalizations; viewed another way, they are manifestations of prejudice. And in fact one of the unhappiest complexities of the logic of neighborhood is that it can so often lead one wrongly to impute to another person some behavioral problem on the basis of the latter's membership in a racial or economic group. Even worse, under cover of acting in the interests of the neighborhood, some people may give vent to the most unjustified and neurotic prejudices.

However much we may regret such expressions of prejudice, it does little good to imagine that the occasion for their expression can be wished away. We may even pass laws (as I think we should) making it illegal to use certain outward characteristics (like race) as grounds for excluding people from a neighborhood. But the core problem will remain—owing to the importance of community to most people, and given the process whereby new arrivals are inducted into and constrained by the sanctions of the neighborhood, the suspicion of heterogeneity will remain and will only be overcome when a person proves by his actions that his distinctive characteristic is not a sign of any disposition to violate the community's norms.

Such a view seems to be at odds with the notion that the big city is the center of cosmopolitanism—by which is meant, among other things, diversity. And so it is. A small fraction of the population (in my judgment, a *very* small fraction) may want diversity so much that it will seek out the most cosmopolitan sections of the cities as places to live. Some of these people are intellectuals, others are young, unmarried persons with a taste for excitement before assuming the responsibilities of a family, and still others are "misfits" who have dropped out of society for a variety of reasons. Since one element of this group—the intellectuals—writes the books which define the "urban problem," we are likely to be confused by their

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preferences and assume that the problem is in part to maintain the heterogeneity and cosmopolitanism of the central city—to attract and hold a neat balance among middle-class families, young culture-lovers, lower-income Negroes, "colorful" Italians, and big businessmen. *To assume this is to mistake the preferences of the few for the needs of the many.* And even the few probably exaggerate just how much diversity they wish. Manhattan intellectuals are often as worried about crime in the streets as their cousins in Queens. The desired diversity is "safe" diversity—a harmless variety of specialty stores, esoteric bookshops, "ethnic" restaurants, and highbrow cultural enterprises.

On "middle-class values"

At this point I had better take up explicitly the dark thoughts forming in the minds of some readers that this analysis is little more than an elaborate justification for prejudice, philistinism, conformity, and (worst of all) "middle-class values." The number of satirical books on suburbs seem to suggest that the creation of a sense of community is at best little more than enforcing the lowest common denominator of social behavior by means of *kaffee klatsches* and the exchange of garden tools; at worst, it is the end of privacy and individuality and the beginning of discrimination in its uglier forms.

I have tried to deal with the prejudice argument above, though no doubt inadequately. Prejudice exists; so does the desire for community; both often overlap. There is no "solution" to the problem, though stigmatizing certain kinds of prejudgments (such as those based on race) is helpful. Since (in my opinion) social class is the primary basis (with age and religion not far behind) on which community-maintaining judgments are made, and since social class (again, in my opinion) is a much better predictor of behavior than race, I foresee the time when racial distinctions will be much less salient (though never absent) in handling community problems. Indeed, much of what passes for "race prejudice" today may be little more than class prejudice with race used as a rough indicator of approximate social class.

With respect to the charge of defending "middle-class values," let me stress that the analysis of "neighborhood" offered here makes no assumptions about the substantive values enforced by the communal process. On the contrary, the emphasis is on the process itself; in principle, it could be used to enforce any set of values. To be sure, we most often observe it enforcing the injunctions against noisy children and lawns infested with crabgrass, but I suppose it could also be used to enforce injunctions against turning children into "sissies" and being enslaved by lawn-maintenance chores. In fact, if we turn our attention to the city and end our pre-

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occupation with suburbia, we will find many kinds of neighborhoods with a great variety of substantive values being enforced. Jane Jacobs described how and to what ends informal community controls operate in working-class Italian sections of New York and elsewhere. Middle-class Negro neighborhoods tend also to develop a distinctive code. And Bohemian or "hippie" sections (despite their loud disclaimers of any interest in either restraint or constraint) establish and sustain a characteristic ethos.

People without communities

Viewed historically, the process whereby neighborhoods, in the sense intended in this article, have been formed in the large cities might be thought of as one in which order arose out of chaos to return in time to a new form of disorder.

Immigrants, thrust together in squalid central-city ghettos, gradually worked their way out to establish, first with the aid of streetcar lines and then with the aid of automobiles, more or less homogeneous and ethnically distinct neighborhoods of single-family and two-family houses. In the Boston survey, the *average* respondent had lived in his present neighborhood for *about twenty years.* When asked what his neighborhood had been like when he was growing up, the vast majority of those questioned said that it was "composed of people pretty much like myself"—similar, that is, in income, ethnicity, religion, and so forth. In time, of course, families—especially those of childrearing age—began spilling out over the city limits into the suburbs, and were replaced in the central city by persons lower in income than themselves.

Increasingly, the central city is coming to be made up of persons who face special disabilities in creating and maintaining a sense of community. There are several such groups, each with a particular problem and each with varying degrees of ability to cope with that problem. One is composed of affluent whites without children (young couples, single persons, elderly couples whose children have left home) who either (as with the "young swingers") lack an interest in community or (as with the elderly couples) lack the ability to participate meaningfully in the maintenance of community. But for such persons, there are alternatives to community—principally, the occupancy of a special physical environment that in effect insulates the occupant from such threats as it is the function of community to control. They move into high-rise buildings in which their apartment is connected by an elevator to either a basement garage (where they can step directly into their car) or to a lobby guarded by a doorman and perhaps even a private police force. Thick walls and high fences protect such open spaces as exist from the intrusion of outsiders. The apartments may even be air

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conditioned, so that the windows need never be opened to admit street noises. Interestingly, a common complaint of such apartment-dwellers is that, in the newer buildings at least, the walls are too thin to ensure privacy—in short, the one failure of the physical substitute for community occasions the major community-oriented complaint.

A second group of noncommunal city residents are the poor whites, often elderly, who financially or for other reasons are unable to leave the old central-city neighborhood when it changes character. For many, that change is the result of the entry of Negroes or Puerto Ricans into the block, and this gives rise to the number of anti-Negro or anti-Puerto Rican remarks which an interviewer encounters. But sometimes the neighborhood is taken over by young college students, or by artists, or by derelicts; then the remarks are anti-youth, anti-student, anti-artist, or anti-drunk. The fact that the change has instituted a new (and to the older resident) less seemly standard of conduct is more important than the attributes of the persons responsible for the change. Elderly persons, because they lack physical vigor and the access to neighbors which having children facilitates, are especially vulnerable to neighborhood changes and find it especially difficult to develop substitutes for community —except, of course, to withdraw behind locked doors and drawn curtains. They cannot afford the high-rise buildings and private security guards that for the wealthier city-dweller are the functional equivalent of communal sanctions.

In the Boston survey, the fear of impropriety and violence was highest for those respondents who were the oldest and the poorest. Preoccupation with such issues as the major urban problem was greater among women than among men, among those over sixty-five years of age than among those under, among Catholics more than among Jews, and among those earning less than $5,000 a year more than among those earning higher incomes. (Incidentally, these were *not* the same persons most explicitly concerned about and hostile to Negroes—anti-Negro sentiment was more common among middle-aged married couples who had children and modestly good incomes.)

The third group of persons afflicted by the perceived breakdown of community are the Negroes. For them, residential segregation as well as other factors have led to a condition in which there is relatively little spatial differentiation among Negroes of various class levels. Lower-class, working-class, and middle-class Negroes are squeezed into close proximity, one on top of the other, in such a way as to inhibit or prevent the territorial separation necessary for the creation and maintenance of different communal life styles. Segregation in the housing market may be (I suspect it is) much more intense with respect to lower-cost housing than with middle-cost

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housing, suggesting that middle-class Negroes may find it easier to move into previously all-white neighborhoods. But the constricted supply of low-cost housing means that a successful invasion of a new area by middle-class Negroes often leads to that break being followed rather quickly by working- and lower-class Negroes. As a result, unless middle-class Negroes can leapfrog out to distant white (or new) communities, they will find themselves struggling to assert hegemony over a territory threatened on several sides by Negroes with quite different life styles.

This weakness of community in black areas may be the most serious price we will pay for residential segregation. It is often said that the greatest price is the perpetuation of a divided society, one black and the other white. While there is some merit in this view, it overlooks the fact that most ethnic groups, when reasonably free to choose a place to live, have chosen to live among people similar to themselves. (I am thinking especially of the predominantly Jewish suburbs.) *The real price of segregation, in my opinion, is not that it forces blacks and whites apart but that it forces blacks of different class positions together.*

What city government cannot do

Communal social controls tend to break down either when persons with an interest in, and the competence for, maintaining a community no longer live in the area or when they remain but their neighborhood is not sufficiently distinct, territorially, from areas with different or threatening life styles. In the latter case especially, the collapse of informal social controls leads to demands for the imposition of formal or institutional controls—demands for "more police protection," for more or better public services, and the like. The difficulty, however, is that there is relatively little government can do directly to maintain a neighborhood community. It can, of course, assign more police officers to it, but there are real limits to the value of this response. For one thing, a city only has so many officers and those assigned to one neighborhood must often be taken away from another. And perhaps more important, the police can rarely manage all relevant aspects of conduct in public places whatever may be their success in handling serious crime (such as muggings or the like). Juvenile rowdiness, quarrels among neighbors, landlord-tenant disputes, the unpleasant side effects of a well-patronized tavern—all these are matters which may be annoying enough to warrant police intervention but not to warrant arrests. Managing these kinds of public disorder is a common task for the police, but one that they can rarely manage to everyone's satisfaction —precisely because the disorder arises out of a dispute among residents over what *ought* be the standard of proper conduct.

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In any case, city governments have, over the last few decades, become increasingly remote from neighborhood concerns. Partly this has been the consequence of the growing centralization of local government—mayors are getting stronger at the expense of city councils, city-wide organizations (such as newspapers and civic associations) are getting stronger at the expense of neighborhood-based political parties, and new "superagencies" are being created in city hall to handle such matters as urban renewal, public welfare, and anti-poverty programs. Mayors and citizens alike in many cities have begun to react against this trend and to search for ways of reinvolving government in neighborhood concerns: mayors are setting up "little city halls," going on walking tours of their cities, and meeting with neighborhood and block clubs. But there is a limit to how effective such responses can be, because whatever the institutional structure, the issues that most concern a neighborhood are typically those about which politicians can do relatively little.

For one thing, the issues involve disputes among the residents of a neighborhood, or between the residents of two adjoining neighborhoods, and the mayor takes sides in these matters only at his peril. For another, many of the issues involve no tangible stake—they concern more the *quality* of life and competing standards of propriety and less the dollars-and-cents value of particular services or programs. Officials with experience in organizing little city halls or police-community relations programs often report that a substantial portion (perhaps a majority) of the complaints they receive concern people who "don't keep up their houses," or who "let their children run wild," or who "have noisy parties." Sometimes the city can do something (by, for example, sending around the building inspectors to look over a house that appears to be a firetrap or by having the health department require someone to clean up a lot he has littered), but just as often the city can do little except offer its sympathy.

Poverty and community

Indirectly, and especially over the long run, government can do much more. First and foremost, it can help persons enter into those social classes wherein the creation and maintenance of community is easiest. Lower-class persons are (by definition, I would argue) those who attach little importance to the opinions of others, are preoccupied with the daily struggle for survival and the immediate gratifications that may be attendant on survival, and inclined to uninhibited, expressive conduct. (A lower-*income* person, of course, is not necessarily lower *class;* the former condition reflects how much money he has, while the latter indicates the attitudes he possesses.) Programs designed to increase prosperity and end pov-

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erty (defined as having too little money) will enable lower-income persons who do care about the opinions of others to leave areas populated by lower-income persons who don't care (that is, areas populated by lower-class persons).

Whether efforts to eliminate poverty by raising incomes will substantially reduce the size of the lower class is a difficult question. The progress we make will be much slower than is implied by those who are currently demanding an "immediate" and "massive" "commitment" to "end poverty." I favor many of these programs, but I am skeptical that we really know as much about how to end our social problems as those persons who blame our failure simply on a lack of "will" seem to think. I suspect that know-how is in as short supply as will power. But what is clear to me is that *programs that seek to eliminate poverty in the cities will surely fail,* for every improvement in the income and employment situation in the large cities will induce an increased migration of more poor people from rural and small-town areas to those cities. The gains are likely to be wiped out as fast as they are registered. To end urban poverty it is necessary to end rural poverty; thus, programs aimed specifically at the big cities will not succeed, while programs aimed at the nation as a whole may.

The need to consider poverty as a national rather than an urban problem, which has been stated most persuasively by John Kain and others, is directly relevant to the problem of community. *Programs that try to end poverty in the cities, to the extent they succeed, will probably worsen, in the short run, the problems of maintaining a sense of community in those cities—and these communal problems are, for most persons, the fundamental urban problems.* People migrate to the cities now because cities are, on the whole, more prosperous than other places. Increasing the advantage the city now enjoys, without simultaneously improving matters elsewhere, will increase the magnitude of that advantage, increase the flow of poor migrants, and thus make more difficult the creation and maintenance of communal order, especially in those working-class areas most vulnerable to an influx of lower-income newcomers. This will be true whether the migrants are white or black, though it will be especially serious for blacks because of the compression effects of segregation in the housing market.

The differences among people

It is, of course, rather misleading to speak in global terms of "classes" as if all middle-class (or all working-class) persons were alike. Nothing could be further from the truth; indeed, the failure to recognize intraclass differences in life style has been a major defect of those social commentaries on "middle-class values" and

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"conformity." The book by Herbert J. Gans on Levittown is a refreshing exception to this pattern, in that it calls attention to fundamental cleavages in life style in what to the outside observer appears to be an entirely homogeneous, "middle-class" suburb. Partly the confusion arises out of mistaking economic position with life style—some persons may be economically working-class but expressively middle-class, or vice versa.

To what extent can persons with low incomes display and act upon middle-class values? To what extent is there a substitute for affluence as a resource permitting the creation and maintenance of a strong neighborhood community? Apparently some Italian neighborhoods with relatively low incomes nonetheless develop strong communal controls. The North End of Boston comes to mind. Though economically disadvantaged, and though the conventional signs of "middle-class values" (neat lawns, quiet streets, single-family homes) are almost wholly absent, the regulation of conduct in public places is nonetheless quite strong. The incidence of street crime is low, "outsiders" are carefully watched, and an agreed-on standard of conduct seems to prevail.

Perhaps a strong and stable family structure (as among Italians) permits even persons of limited incomes to maintain a sense of community. If so, taking seriously the reported weakness in the Negro family structure becomes important, not simply because of its connection with employment and other individual problems, but because of its implications for communal order. Indeed, substantial gains in income in areas with weak family and communal systems may produce little or no comparable gain in public order (and I mean here order as judged by the residents of the affected area, not order as judged by some outside observer). What most individuals may want in their public places they may not be able to obtain owing to an inability to take collective action or to make effective their informal sanctions.

"Black Power" and community

It is possible that "Black Power" will contribute to the ability of some neighborhoods to achieve communal order. I say "possible"—it is far from certain, because I am far from certain as to what Black Power implies or as to how dominant an ethos it will become. As I understand it, Black Power is not a set of substantive objectives, much less a clearly worked-out ideology, but rather an attitude, a posture, a communal code that attaches high value to pride, self-respect, and the desire for autonomy. Though it has programmatic implications ("neighborhood self-control," "elect black mayors," and so forth), the attitude is (to me) more significant than the program. Or stated another way, the cultural implications of Black Power may

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in the long run prove to be more important than its political implications.

In the short run, of course, Black Power—like any movement among persons who are becoming politically self-conscious, whether here or in "developing" nations—will produce its full measure of confusion, disorder, and demagoguery. Indeed, it sometimes appears to be little more than a license to shout slogans, insult "whitey," and make ever more extravagant bids for power and leadership in black organizations. But these may be only the short-term consequences, and I for one am inclined to discount them somewhat. The long-term implications seem to be a growing pride in self and in the community, and these are prerequisites for the creation and maintenance of communal order.

Historians may someday conclude that while Negroes were given emancipation in the nineteenth century, they had to win it in the twentieth. The most important legacy of slavery and segregation was less, perhaps, the inferior economic position that Negroes enjoyed than the inferior cultural position that was inflicted on them. To the extent it is possible for a group to assert communal values even though economically disadvantaged, Negroes were denied that opportunity because the prerequisite of self-improvement—self-respect—was not generally available to them. The present assertion of self-respect is an event of the greatest significance and, in my view, contributes more to explaining the civil disorders and riots of our larger cities than all the theories of "relative deprivation," "economic disadvantage," and the like. The riots, from this perspective, are expressive acts of self-assertion, not instrumental acts designed to achieve particular objectives. And programs of economic improvement and laws to guarantee civil rights, while desirable in themselves, are not likely to end the disorder.

The fact that these forms of self-expression cause such damage to the black areas of a city may in itself contribute to the development of communal order; the people who are paying the price are the Negroes themselves. The destruction they have suffered may lead to an increased sense of stake in the community and a more intense concern about the maintenance of community self-control. Of course, no amount of either self-respect or commitment to community can overcome a serious lack of resources—money, jobs, and business establishments.

No inside without an outside

Because the disorders are partly the result of growing pride and assertiveness does not mean, as some have suggested, that we "let them riot" because it is "therapeutic." For one thing, whites who control the police and military forces have no right to ignore the

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interests of the nonrioting black majority in favor of the instincts of the rioting black minority. Most Negroes want *more* protection and security, not less, regardless of what certain white radicals might say. Furthermore, the cultural value of Black Power or race pride *depends in part on it being resisted by whites.* The existence of a "white enemy" may be as necessary for the growth of Negro self-respect as the presumed existence of the "capitalist encirclement" was for the growth of socialism in the Soviet Union. As James Stephens once said, there cannot be an inside without an outside.

Nor does Black Power require that control over all political and economic institutions be turned over forthwith to any black organization that happens to demand it. Neighborhoods, black or white, should have control over some functions and not over others, the decision in each case requiring a rather careful analysis of the likely outcomes of alternative distributions of authority. Cultures may be invigorated and even changed by slogans and expressive acts, but constitutions ought to be the result of deliberation and careful choices. The reassertion of neighborhood values, by blacks and whites alike, strikes me as a wholly desirable reaction against the drift to overly bureaucratized central city governments, but there are no simple formulas or rhetorical "principles" on the basis of which some general and all-embracing reallocation of power can take place. Those who find this reservation too timid should bear in mind that functions given to black neighborhoods will also have to be given to white neighborhoods—it is not politically feasible (or perhaps even legally possible) to decentralize power over black communities but centralize it over white ones. Are those radicals eager to have Negro neighborhoods control their own police force equally eager to have adjoining working-class Polish or Italian neighborhoods control theirs?

In any case, no one should be optimistic that progress in creating meaningful communities within central cities will be rapid or easy. The fundamental urban problems, though partly economic and political, are at root questions of values, and these change or assert themselves only slowly, if at all. And whatever gains might accrue from the social functions of Black Power might easily be outweighed by a strong white reaction against it and thus against blacks. The competing demands for territory within our cities is intense and not easily managed, and for some time to come the situation will remain desperately precarious.

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"Shortcuts" to social change?

AMITAI ETZIONI

IN 1965, when New York City was hit by a "crime wave" (which later turned out to be, in part, a consequence of improved record-keeping), the city increased the number of lights in crime-infested streets. Two of my fellow sociologists described the new anti-crime measure as a "gimmick": it was cheap, could be introduced quickly, was likely to produce momentary results, but would actually achieve nothing. "Treating a symptom just shifts the expression of the malaise elsewhere," one sociologist reminded the other, reciting a favorite dictum of the field. Criminals were unlikely to be rehabilitated by the additional light; they would simply move to other streets. Or, when policemen are put on the subways, there is a rise in hold-ups in the buses. So goes the argument.

The same position is reiterated whenever a shortcut solution, usually technological in nature, is offered to similar problems which are believed to have deep-seated sociological and psychological roots. Because of a shortage of teachers, television education and teaching machines have been introduced into the schools. But most educators call this a "gimmicky" solution, for machines are "superficial" trainers and not "deep" educators. Or, in the instances of individuals who suffer from alcohol or drug addiction, blocking drugs (which kill the craving) and antagonistic drugs (which spoil the satisfaction) are now used. (Among the best known are, respectively, methadone and antabuse.) But, it is said, the source of the addiction lies deep in the personalities of those afflicted and in the social conditions that en-

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courage such addiction. If a person drinks to overcome his guilt or to escape temporarily the misery of his poverty, what good is antabuse to him? It neither reduces his guilt nor his poverty; the only effect it has is to make him physically ill if he consumes liquor. Dr. Howard A. Rusk, who writes an influential medical column in *The New York Times*, stated recently:

> One of the most dangerous errors in medicine is to treat symptoms and not get at the underlying pathology of the disease itself. Aspirin and ice packs may lower the fever but at the same time allow the underlying infection to destroy the vital organs of the body. So it is with social sickness.

Until a few years ago, I shared these views. But I was confronted with the following situation: The resources needed to transform the "basic conditions" in contemporary America are unavailable and unlikely to be available in the near future. So far as dollars and cents are concerned, Mayor John V. Lindsay testified before Congress that he needed $100 billion to rebuild New York's slums; at the present rate, it would take forty years before such an amount would be available to eliminate *all* American slums. And that is housing alone! With regard to all needs, a study by the National Planning Association calculated that if the United States sought, by 1985, to realize the modest goals specified by the Eisenhower Commission on National Goals, it would (assuming even a 4 per cent growth rate in GNP) be at least $150 billion a year short.

But even if the economic resources were available, and the political will to use them for social improvement were present, we would still face other severe shortages, principally professional manpower. In the United States in 1966 there were an estimated four to five million alcoholics, 556,000 patients in mental hospitals, and 501,000 out-patients in mental health clinics. To serve them there were about 1,100 psychoanalysts and 7,000 certified psychotherapists. If each therapist could treat fifty patients intensively, a staggering figure by present standards, this would still leave most alcoholic and mental patients without effective treatment. Today most of those in mental hospitals are not treated at all: only 2 per cent of the hospital staffs in 1964 were psychiatrists, only 10 per cent were professionals of *any* sort; most of the staff are "attendants," more than half of whom have not completed high school and only 8 per cent of whom have had any relevant training.

Thus, we must face the fact that either some shortcuts will have to be found or, in all likelihood, most social problems confronting us will not be treated in the foreseeable future. Forced to reconsider the problem, I decided to re-examine the utility of "shortcuts." For example, do criminals really move to other streets when those they frequent are more brightly illuminated? Or do some of them "shift"

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to lesser crimes than hold-ups? Or stay home? Do shortcuts deflect our attention from "real issues" and eventually boomerang? In my re-examination,[1] I found some facts which surprised at least me.

Decisions without facts

Take, first, the question of crime. It turned out that the sociologist who asserted that, when more guards were put on the subways, criminals shifted to buses, was merely making luncheon conversation; he simply "assumed" this on the a priori proposition that the criminal had to go somewhere. He had neither statistics nor any other kind of information to back up his proposition. I found that the same lack of relevant information held for *all* the situations I examined. One can show this even in such a "heavily researched" area as alcohol addiction.

Alcoholism is very difficult to treat. Most psychoanalysts refuse to treat alcoholics. The rate of remission is notoriously high. Tranquilizers are reported to be effective, but when I asked doctors why they are not used more widely, they suggested that these drugs provided no "basic" treatment and that patients became addicted to tranquilizers instead of alcohol. Searching for the source of this belief, I was directed to a publication of the United States Public Health Service entitled *Alcohol and Alcoholism*, a very competent summary of the knowledge of the field which is heavily laced with references to numerous studies. Here I found the following two statements:

> [Tranquilizers] are highly effective, but some alcoholics eventually become addicted to the very tranquilizers which helped them break away from their dependency on alcohol.
>
> For most patients . . . [tranquilizers] can produce lasting benefit only as part of a program of psychotherapy.

I wrote to the Public Health Service. Their reply was that

> the bases for both of these statements are "social information" rather than substantive research. It is the clinical experience of many physicians (and some therapists) that some alcoholics have a tendency to become dependent on (whatever that means) other substances in addition to alcohol. There is, however, considerable disagreement on the extent to which this is a problem.

Thus, the Public Health Service really does not know if tranquilizers are only a "symptomatic treatment" which results in the shift of the problem from one area to another; it does not know what proportion of alcoholics can be "deeply" helped by these drugs, or

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[1] The study is based on work conducted with the help of the Russell Sage Foundation. For additional discussion, see Amitai Etzioni, *The Active Society* (New York: The Free Press, 1968).

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even if those who remain addicted to tranquilizers, instead of alcohol, may not be better off than before.

The case of drugs

The same confusion exists about drugs. Until 1925, the regulation of drug addiction in the United States was largely in the hands of the medical profession; then it was declared to be a police matter and turned over to the Federal Bureau of Narcotics. The change drove the addicts underground, pushed up the price of narcotics, and prompted the large number of "secondary crimes" (to finance the habit) which are associated with addiction in this country. Drug users were involved in 22.4 per cent of crimes involving property committed in New York City in 1963. While this is less than the more often-cited figures—that addicts are responsible for "half of all crimes"—it is a staggering cost paid for the partial suppression of addiction.

What body of evidence, medical or sociological, led to this rather far-reaching policy change? In fact, the chief reasons had little to do with evidence at all. The central fact was the ambition of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics (formerly the Narcotics Division of the Treasury Department) and of its former head, Harry J. Anslinger. He and his men conducted a systematic and effective campaign—in the courts, Congress, and the press—in favor of the punitive and against the medical approach to addiction because they viewed addicts as criminals.

Or, take the problem of distinctions among drugs. Over the years, many narcotic users, some medical authorities, and several leading social scientists have pointed out that the American drug laws do not distinguish between marijuana and heroin. Marijuana apparently has fewer effects than liquor; several experts argue that, unless one is in the proper company and mood, one does not even gain a "high" feeling from it. Alcoholism causes 11,000 deaths in the United States each year, not counting the thousands of fatalities inflicted by drunken drivers; marijuana per se causes none. Marijuana almost surely is less harmful than cigarettes. Some persons have smoked marijuana for years without visible effects. (Fifty-eight-year-old Mrs. Garnett Brennan, an elementary school principal in Nicasio, California, stated that she had smoked marijuana daily since 1949. Her suspension brought her to the attention of national television and press. She showed none of the symptoms widely expected in persons who have been on narcotics for long periods.) Yet the laws against the *possession* (not just the sale) of marijuana and heroin are equally severe—up to a forty-year jail sentence in some states.

Several authorities in the field have called for legalizing the consumption of marijuana. Those who object argue (1) that marijuana's

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effects are more severe, especially in accumulation, than has been acknowledged by those who favor its legalization, and (2) that the use of marijuana leads to the use of heroin, in a search for higher "highs," or through the mixing of heroin and marijuana by "pushers." Lawmakers, police authorities, opinion-makers, campus deans, and citizens continually make decisions on these matters, yet our information is, at best, quite spotty. Despite police attention to drugs for more than forty years, and the extensive attention focused on drug addiction in recent years, Robert Reinhold reported in *The New York Times*, following about two weeks of experts' testimonies in a 1967 Boston trial of two youths accused of possessing marijuana that

> The most striking impression to emerge from the Boston testimony is that there is a paucity of scientific evidence regarding the drug. Witness after witness offered opinion, based on personal observation and anecdotal evidence rather than on scientific experimentation.

On October 17, 1967, James L. Goddard, Commissioner of the United States Food and Drug Administration, stated: "Whether or not marijuana is a more dangerous drug than alcohol is debatable—I don't happen to think it is." He added: "We don't know what its long term effects are." A few days later, citing no more evidence than Dr. Goddard, Sir Harry Greenfield, chairman of the United Nations Permanent Central Narcotics Board, rejected the "tendentious suggestions" that marijuana was not "very dangerous." Nor has research settled the question whether continuous use of heroin is physiologically debilitating, or whether the symptoms usually associated with the use of heroin are actually the effects of withdrawal. And neither do we know whether a user's inability to function in a social setting is a cause or an effect of his use of heroin.

The main point I wish to make, though, concerns not marijuana but "shortcuts." And the common characteristics of this and other such situations is that the decision-makers *and* experts do not have the information needed to provide the answers. We could, as a short cut, reduce much of the drug problem by legalizing marijuana. *That* we do know. The rest is conjecture.

Of taxis and fire alarms

Many other questions I have examined are in the same condition. Neither the New York City Police Department nor any other city agency knew what had happened to the criminals who were driven off the lighted streets or off the subways. More recently, there was (or was believed to be) a crime wave in the form of hold-ups of taxi drivers. The police department initiated a new policy which permitted off-duty policemen to "moonlight" as taxi drivers. They were allowed to carry firearms and exercise their regular police preroga-

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tives. This led to a rapid reduction in the number of taxi holdups. Good news—unless, as some claim, these muggers were now driven to robbing old ladies. We know that they are not back on the subways (which is relatively easy to establish). Whether they are operating elsewhere in New York City, in other cities, in other illegitimate pursuits, and whether these are less or more costly to society than mugging, or even if they have switched to *legitimate* undertakings, no one knows. The one thing we do know is that the original "symptom" has been reduced.

False fire alarms plague the cities; there were 37,414 such calls in New York City in 1966. In the summer of 1966 the New York City Fire Department installed a whistle device, which is activated when the glass is broken, to call attention to persons who pull the trigger of an alarm box. This, it was believed, would reduce the number of false alarms. "Gimmick," one may say; the exhibitionists who set the alarms now create some other mischief, such as causing real fires in order to see the fire trucks racing at their say-so. But nobody knows if these were actually exhibitionists and what they now do. Have they turned arsonists—or are they taking more tranquilizers? In this case it is not clear if the "symptom" was handled; in 1967 there were more false alarms than in 1966, but the device was not yet universally introduced and not publicized, so it could not deter.

Emotions and politics

Although almost everybody wants "facts" on which to make decisions, the obvious point is that facts are frequently less powerful in shaping a decision than the long-held prejudices of a person. Many a decision-maker in effect says, "I don't care what the facts are; I am against 'it' because it is evil." In the case of drugs, the methadone programs are a revealing case in point. There is fairly good evidence that methadone kills the craving for heroin (persons on methadone have shot themselves with as much as sixteen units of heroin without attaining a "high"), removes the physiologically debilitating effects of heroin (if it has any) without introducing such effects of its own, and that this treatment enables those who take methadone to function socially more effectively than when they were on heroin.[2] Methadone thus is a "shortcut" *par excellence* because while it solves at least part of the problem, addiction, it does not change the personality which craves for an addicting drug (if there is such a personality), nor does it alter the social setting which encourages the craving.

Although each of the preceding statements in favor of shifting

[2] I benefited from a discussion with Dr. Vincent P. Dole and a visit with his patients on methadone at the Rockefeller University.

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patients from heroin to methadone is not unquestionably substantiated, the critics of the program stress something else: the fact that, in the end, the person is still addicted. A person who regularly takes methadone does seem to become addicted to *it;* at least, it is believed that if a heroin addict stops taking methadone, the craving for heroin will reassert itself. Dr. Robert W. Baird, Director of the Haven Clinic for heroin addicts in New York City, has said that using methadone is "like giving the alcoholic in the Bowery bourbon instead of whiskey in an attempt to get him off his alcoholism." Professor Bernard Barber in his recent book, *Drugs and Society,* reports that in the past the United States Public Health Service "has not accepted any treatment of addicts that left the patient dependent on another drug." Methadone is still legally considered a narcotic and Section 151-392, Regulation No. 5 of the Bureau of Narcotics decrees that treatment by the use of such a drug is by definition not a treatment and hence technically illegal.

Now, if the argument that a person addicted to methadone is still not able to function in society, or not as well as a fully rehabilitated person (a position taken by some experts), we then have a question of fact: do they or don't they? But the antagonism to such a resolution will not even permit such a question to be seriously raised. The puritanical tradition is still sufficiently strong in American culture so that the use of any substitute drugs, even if less harmful, is regarded as an indulgence. When the American Medical Association in November announced the launching of a year-long scientific study of the effects of marijuana to test the question of its harm, AMA president Dr. Rouse Milford added—before the first day of research—"No good can come from its [marijuana's] use. It's an hallucinogenic drug." Many Americans seem to hold that persons who are attracted to a narcotic should view this as a weakness of the flesh which they should fight and overcome. Similarly, the Food and Drug Administration is not particularly friendly to efforts to find "safe" cigarettes, or blocking or antagonist medication for smokers. It keeps stressing that "Will Power Is the Only Smoking Remedy." Americans, at least when speaking collectively, seem to value a strong person, one able to function without narcotics (however stress-provoking his social environment) and one who seeks a life of achievement and enterprise, not "artistic" existence or nirvana.

Often the underlying prejudice sneaks through when the method of treatment is discussed. When one hears those who prefer the harsh "cold turkey" withdrawal over the painless transition from heroin to methadone, one gains the impression that the heroin users are viewed as sinners, who are to be penalized (or who have to undergo penance) before they are to be considered pure enough to be allowed to return to the flock.

Where there are emotions, politics is not far behind. Politicians

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have a high sensitivity to voters' sentiments and a low tolerance for risk. If the voters have (or seem to have) puritanical sentiments, a politician prefers "cold turkey" (despite the known fact that 85 to 95 per cent of all of those thus treated return to the use of heroin once released from supervision) over "soft belly" methadone (despite the fact that the remission rate is *much* lower).

And there is intra-professional politics as well. Were the facts cut and dry, few experts would support an ineffectual program or question one which "works." But as the merits of various approaches are almost always contested, battles rage over funds, prestige, and missions, as for example between the Synanon people (who believe in complete rehabilitation via a version of group therapy), the therapeutic professions (psychiatry, psychotherapy) which have little sympathy for "sheer" chemical-medical treatment, and the methadone doctors and their supporters. Similar battles are fought in other fields, for instance between those who would use teaching machines and television to help alleviate the shortage of teachers and those who consider these "gimmicks" and favor high raises in teachers' salaries and improvement in the teachers' working conditions and status to attract more men and women into the field.

"Fractionating" the problem

Often a solution to a long-raging controversy over the more effective treatment of a social ill becomes possible once we realize that we have asked the wrong question. Similarly, when we ask whether "shortcuts" really work, we approach the problem in an unproductive way by lumping together too many specific questions.

First, the question must be answered separately from a societal and from a personal vantage point. Some shortcuts "work" for the society, in the limited sense at least that they reduce the societal cost of the problem (not only the dollar and cents cost, but also ancillary social effects), but not the personal costs. For instance, between 1955 and 1965 the number of patients in state mental hospitals declined from 558,922 to 475,761. This decline, however, was not the result of new, therapeutic-oriented, community mental-health centers, but mainly caused by introduction of massive use of tranquilizing drugs, "which do not 'cure' mental illness and often have been called 'chemical straitjackets.'" Tranquilizers obviously do not change personalities or social conditions. Patients, to put it bluntly, are often so drugged that they doze on their couches at home rather than being locked up in a state mental hospital or wandering in the streets. How effective the shift to "pharmaceutical treatment" (as the prescription of sedatives is called) is depends on the perspective: society's costs are much reduced (the cost of maintaining a patient in a state mental hospital is about seven dollars a day; on drugs—

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an average of fifteen cents). Personal "costs" are reduced to some degree (most persons, it seems, are less abused at home than in state mental hospitals). But, obviously, heavily drugged people are not effective members of society or happy human beings. Still, a device or procedure which offers a reduction of costs on one dimension (societal *or* personal) without *increasing* the costs on others, despite the fact that it does not "solve" the problem, is truly useful—almost by definition.

It may be argued that by taking society "off the hook" we deflect its attention from the deeper causes of the malaise, in this case of mental illness. But this, in turn, may be countered by stating that because those causes lie so deep, and because their removal requires such basic transformations, basic remedial action is unlikely to be undertaken. *Often our society seems to be "choosing" not between symptomatic (superficial) treatment and "cause" (full) treatment, but between treatment of symptoms and no treatment at all.* Hence, in the examination of the values of many shortcuts, the ultimate question must be: is the society ready or able to provide full-scale treatment of the problem at hand? If no fundamental change is in sight, most people would favor having at least ameliorations and, hence, shortcuts. Moreover, the underlying assumption that amelioration deflects attention may be questioned: studies of radical social change show that it often is preceded by "piecemeal" reforms which, though not originally aimed at the roots of the problem, create a new setting, or spur the mobilization for further action.

Second, shortcuts seem to "work" fully—for sub-populations and for some problems. It is wrong to ask: "Are teaching machines effective substitutes for teachers?" We should ask: "Are there any teaching needs which machines can effectively serve?" The answer then is quite clear: they seem to function quite well as routine teachers of mechanical skills (typing, driving) and of rudimentary mathematics and language skills. Similarly, machines may be quite effective for those motivated to learn and ineffective for those who need to be motivated. A recent study which compared 400 television lectures with 400 conventional ones at Pennsylvania State University showed the television instruction to be as effective on almost all dimensions studied. It freed teachers for discussion of the television lecture material and for personal tutoring. After all, books are not more personal than television sets.

To put it in more general terms, "gimmicks" may be effective for those in a problem-population whose needs are "shallow," and much less so for those whose problems are deep; and most problem-populations seem to have a significant sub-population whose ills or wants are "shallow." Critics of methadone have argued that it works only for those highly motivated addicts who volunteer to take it. But this is not to be construed as an indictment; while such a treatment

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may reduce the addiction problem "only" by a third, or a quarter, this constitutes a rather substantial reduction.

The same may be said about procedures for training the hard-core unemployed. These are said to "cream" the population, focusing on those relatively easy to train. Such an approach is damaging only to the extent that the other segments of the unemployed are neglected *because* of such a program and on the assumption that they too can be as readily helped. Otherwise, much can be said in favor of "creaming," if only that it makes most effective use of the resources available.

Debates, indeed fights, among the advocates of various birth-control devices—pharmaceutical means (pills), mechanical devices (especially the IUD), sterilization, and the rhythm method—are often couched in terms of one program against all others, especially when the advocates seek to influence the government of a developing nation on the best means of birth control. The Population Council, at least for a while, was "hot" on the IUD. Some drug manufacturers promote the pill. The Catholic church showed more than a passing interest in a rhythm clock (a device to help the woman tell her more from her less fertile periods). In such battles of the experts and "schools," the merits and demerits of each device are often explored without reference to the persons who will use them. Actually, though, merits and demerits change with the attributes of the "target" sub-population. The rhythm methods may be inadequate for most, but when a sub-population for religious reasons will not use other birth control devices, some reduction in birth may well be achieved here by the "gimmicky" rhythm clocks. Pills seems to work fine for "Westernized," routine-minding, middle class women who remember to use them with the necessary regularity. They are much less effective in a population that is less routine in its habits. The IUD may be best where persons who are highly ambivalent about birth control can rely on the loops while forgetting that they are using them.

It is in the nature of shortcuts to be much less expensive in terms of dollars and cents and trained manpower than "deeper" solutions. The HEW cost-benefit analyses reported in *The Public Interest*, No. 8 (Summer 1967) are a case in point. While PPBS is far from a "science of decision-making," it occasionally does provide new insights and raise fresh considerations. If we assume that the following statistics are *roughly* correct, even allowing for a margin of error of 30 to 50 per cent, we still see the technological devices are much less expensive—per life saved—than the "deeper," educational, approaches. The problem was the effectiveness of rival programs in the prevention of "motor vehicle injuries." When various programs were compared in terms of their cost-effectiveness, it was found that the use of technical devices was most economical: $87

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per death averted by the use of seat belts and $100 per life saved by the use of restraining devices. The cost of motorcyclist helmets was high in comparison—$3,000 per man; but it was low when compared to the "fundamental" approach of driver education. Here, it is reported, $88,000 is required to avert one death. Of course we may ask for both technological devices *and* education; and the benefit of technological devices by themselves may be slowly exhausted. Still, this data would direct us then to search for more and improved mechanical devices (e.g., seat belts which hold the shoulders and not only the abdomen) rather than spending millions, let us say, on "educational" billboards ("Better Late Than Never"). I am willing to predict—a hazardous business for a sociologist—that the smoking problems will be much reduced by a substitute cigarette (not just a tarless but also a "cool" one, as the hot smoke seems to cause some medical problems) rather than by convincing millions to give up this imbedded symbol of sophistication and—for teenagers—protest.

The power of formulas

Not all shortcuts are technological. There is frequently a social problem which can be treated if social definitions are changed; and this can be achieved in part by new legislation. This may seem the most "gimmicky" of all solutions: call it a different name and the problem will go away. Actually, there is much power—both alienating and healing—in societal name calling, and such redefinitions are not at all easy to come by. After years of debate, study, and "politicking," homosexuality was "redefined" in Britain in 1967; it became less of a problem for society and for the homosexuals after Parliament enacted a law which defined intercourse between consenting adults of the same sex in privacy as legal and, in this sense, socially tolerable. The remaining stigma probably more than suffices to prevent "slippage," i.e., even broader tolerance for other kinds of homosexuality, e.g., those affecting minors.

The extent to which such social definitions of what is legitimate, permissible, or deviant can be more easily altered than personality and social structure is an open question; at best, as a rule, only part of a problem can be thus "treated." This approach is superficial or worse when it defines a social or personal want so as to make it nonexistent (e.g., reducing unemployment by changing the statistical characterization). It is not a "gimmick" in that the problem was created by a social definition—by branding a conduct as undesirable or worse when actually it was one of those "crimes without victims."

Guns, for instance

There is one area of social conduct where, for reasons which are unclear to me, the blinders fall off, and most social scientists as well

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as many educated citizens see relationships in their proper dimensions and are willing to accept "shortcuts" for what they are worth. This is the area of violent crime and gun control. Usually, progressive-minded people scoff at gimmicks and favor "basic cures." But it is the conservatives who use the anti-shortcut argument to object to gun control as a means of countering violent crimes. On August 10, 1966, on the tower of the University of Texas, Charles Whitman killed, with his Remington rifle, thirteen people and wounded thirty-one. This provided some new impetus to the demand to curb the traffic in guns. About sixty bills were introduced in Congress following President Kennedy's assassination, but none has passed; it is still possible to order by mail for about $27 the same kind of weapon, telescopic lenses included, which Lee Harvey Oswald used. The National Rifle Association spokesmen typically argue that criminals would simply turn to other tools—knives, rods, or dynamite—if no guns were available.

But actually this is one of the areas where the value of shortcuts is both logically quite clear and empirically demonstrable. Logically, it is a matter of understanding probabilities. While motives and modes of crime vary, most murders are not carried out in cold blood but by highly agitated persons. Out of 9,250 so-called "willful" killings which took place in the United States in 1964, only 1,350 were committed in the course of committing some other crime such as robbery or a sex offense. The others, 80.1 per cent were committed among friends, neighbors, and in one's family, by "normally" law-abiding citizens, in the course of a quarrel or following one. Obviously, if deadly weapons were harder to come by, the chances of these quarrels being "cooled out," or a third party intervening, would have been much higher and most fatalities would have been averted.

Second, the damage caused is much affected by the tool used. While it is correct to assume that a knife may be used where there is no gun, the probability of *multiple* fatalities is much lower. And a policeman can learn to defend himself from most assaults without having to use a firearm. Most policemen who are killed on duty are killed by guns; all but one of the fifty-three killed in the United States in 1965, according to official statistics. Hence if the population is disarmed, the fatalities resulting from arming the police can also be saved. Here, as in considering other devices, one must think in terms of multi-factor models and probabilities. No one device, such as a gun-control law, can *solve* the problem. But each additional device may well reduce the probability that a violent act will cause a fatality. This is a "short cut" in the right direction—even if it doesn't lead you all the way home. Not because I don't want to go all the way at once; but because such trips are often not available.

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Toward a modest experiment in cable television

STEPHEN WHITE

OVER the past twenty years there has been developed an impressive technological capacity to transit images and accompanying sound instantaneously and over large distances. Picture definition is surprisingly sharp, and full color transmission is now conventional. The technology is capable also of high fidelity sound, although in practice sound quality at the receiver is usually low. The technology extends also to systems in which image and sound can be stored indefinitely and retrieved at will.

What has been given in the paragraph above is a concise description of an existing communications system. As everyone must be aware, that system is known as "television." At the very moment that the name is written or spoken, however, the nature of the system under consideration becomes obscured, for if "television" (with a small "t") is a technology, "Television" (with a capital "T") is something far more: it is a vast and a complex social institution erected upon that technology. It is extremely difficult to separate the institution and the technology, but it is also crucial that we make a clear differentiation between the two.

What is called to mind by the word "Television" is far more than the box in the corner of the room, or even the complex of condensers, resistors, vacuum tubes, transmitting antenna, relay towers, cameras, and all the rest that combine to create a picture on the tube and an

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appropriate sound in the speaker. For most citizens of the United States, this is likely to appear the least significant aspect of Television. The reality called up by the word is embodied in the three stations which, in most large cities, carry the current programs prepared and produced at the behest of the three major networks, and those programs themselves. In larger cities, the meaning of the word is extended to include one or more independent commercial stations and perhaps an educational station, and the programs that they too transmit.

These three components of Television—technology, station, and program—have become so intimately associated within the single word that it requires an effort of will, so far as most people are concerned, to examine any one of the three independent of the other two. Unless that effort is made, it is quite difficult to conceive of the technology operating without the preparation of elaborate and costly programs, selected and organized by individual stations or by networks operating in behalf of clusters of stations. Television, in this country at least, has never taken any other form, and even in other countries the differences are minor.

None of this is an accident. The shape of Television in every country has been determined by the technology itself, which was the same for all countries, and to a lesser extent by the social environment in which the technology developed.

The natural laws of television

Television was an inevitable consequence of the discovery that electromagnetic waves could be generated cheaply and efficiently, could be readily modulated to carry signals, radiated freely through space, and were readily intercepted by suitable equipment to deliver on command the signals that they carried. All of this constituted a communications system of incredible flexibility and economy. At a cost so small as to be almost negligible, a message could be sent to every person within the ample reach of the transmitting equipment. Initially, the discovery was applied to the transmission of sound only, but from the earliest days of the technology it was apparent that the transmission of both sound and picture would inevitably follow.

The economy of such a communications system was immediately apparent. The great power of the system was apparent as well. Communication can be conducted in many ways—by the printed word, by the spoken word, by the still picture and the moving picture, by gesture, mannerism, tone of voice, by diagram and animation. Television alone is able to combine all of these and to deliver the entire bundle of information in a single moment to thousands or to millions of receivers. Thus, in potency as well as in

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economy, television constituted a communications system immeasurably in advance of anything that had previously existed.

There was, however, a price for all this, and it lay in the laws of nature. One set of laws stipulated that in order to transmit the tremendous amount of information carried by a television signal, a large portion of the electromagnetic spectrum was necessary for each such signal. Another set of laws limited the portion of the electromagnetic spectrum that was suitable for television transmission. A third set of laws, governing interference between electromagnetic waves at or near the same wavelength, prescribed separations among stations, both geographic and with respect to the electromagnetic spectrum. The three sets of laws, taken together, meant that the maximum number of television signals that could be transmitted from any one locality was in theory seven, but that in practice most localities would be limited to two or three if other localities were to have their fair share.

Television, accordingly, came into being as a commodity that was scarce by definition. Like any commodity that is both scarce and in demand, it came at once under pressures which in the end determined the shape of the institution, Television, that grew up around the technology, television.

Television as a scarce resource

In the first place, it appeared inescapable that the impressive new system of communications should serve society as a whole, and could not appropriately be reserved for the purposes of the few. Given the scarcity of television stations, this meant that each such station was obliged to serve a large number of people. In Television terms, this meant at once the imposition of some kind of organization upon the choice of signal to be transmitted: it was necessary to determine what would be transmitted on the basis of some kind of principle that would maximize the number of persons who believed themselves to be served by the system.

This appears so natural that it is necessary to point out how unusual, within the field of communications, it actually is. There is, for example, no comparable imperative within the field of publishing. In principle, anyone may publish and may direct his efforts toward any audience he pleases. *Life* seeks to enlist as reader every literate citizen of the United States; at the same time there are professional journals intended for only a few hundred, and elaborate privately printed publications for a few dozen. There is, in fact, no central regulation within publishing: instead there is the free self-regulation of many thousands of individual wills.

Reinforcing this constraint was another which emerged out of the decision to permit the commercial use of television in the United

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States (although initially not in other countries). The power of television to persuade is enormous. It is, beyond any comparison, the most effective medium for large-scale advertising that has ever been developed. And simply because of this, the financial returns from a small increment of audience are worth almost any investment that the advertiser can reasonably pour into the medium.

With three stations in a community, an advertiser on any one could reasonably expect one-third the audience as his share. If, however, by extraordinary efforts that 33 per cent could be increased to 50 per cent or 75 per cent, his return might be tremendously augmented. There are, of course, economic limits to the process, but by and large there are great incentives for the advertiser, and for the network in behalf of the advertiser, to add to the popularity of their programs even at substantial cost. Hence the inevitable increase in the elaborateness with which programs are prepared, and in the fees paid popular or highly persuasive entertainers and salesmen. Hence, also, for easily comprehended reasons, the unwillingness to experiment with new or novel programs, for the risk that lies in failure is as impressive in its own way as the reward that lies in success.

Out of all this has come the shape of the system known as Television. Its principal components, once again, are three:

1. The technology. It has changed considerably since the system came into being, but the basic technology that is now utilized is, in its important aspects, the technology with which the system was initially endowed.

2. The stations. The decision as to what goes on the air is made either at the individual station, or by networks in behalf of individual stations, in accordance with the encompassing criterion of popularity.

3. The programs. With few exceptions (of which the most important is the local sports program), these are created almost entirely by networks, or in behalf of networks, or by film studios, or are drawn from the backlog of popular productions created earlier by film studios for theatrical exhibition. (Independent stations depend largely upon reruns of network programs.) All programming is highly elaborate: television almost never carries a simple communication. There are some interesting exceptions, and for the sake of stressing, in this place, the degree to which most programs have undergone a high degree of elaboration one such exception might be cited here: in areas where community antenna services have been established, a channel is sometimes given over to the continuous transmission of pictures of a clock face, a thermometer, an anemometer and a humidity indicator, accompanied by unobtrusive phonograph music; another channel may transmit

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hour after hour a picture of a teletypewriter upon which the latest news is endlessly displayed and redisplayed. Needless to say, in view of what has already been pointed out, no conventional station transmits any program as bare as these.

The possibility of a free market

All of this is stated here in so great detail because it is essential to recognize that each component is the consequence of choice. The technology in present use is selected from among all the technology that is now available. Transmission is organized in one out of many possible ways, and programming is achieved in accordance with a set of arbitrary procedures. Simply because each of these *does* constitute a choice from among several alternatives, it is possible to envisage systems in which other choices have been made. But there will be insurmountable obstacles to the mental construction of such alternate systems so long as the present construct of Television is considered, consciously or subconsciously, to be somehow a necessary construct.

There is an odd analogy to the present state of Television. In 1948 and 1949, the transport system that served West Berlin was abruptly destroyed, and physical access to and from the city was limited to aircraft. The number of aircraft serving the city was itself limited by the capacity of the airfields in West Berlin. Under those circumstances, the movement of goods into Berlin fell necessarily under central direction. The choice of goods to be moved was strictly controlled and limited to goods of importance to the mass of citizens in Berlin: foods of high nutritive value, fuel and replacements and parts for machinery needed to keep the city in operation. All these restrictions vanished when the blockade was lifted.

To make the analogy complete, one would have to imagine such a situation enduring globally over a long period of time, rather than the few months of the Berlin Blockade. After a generation or two, it would require an effort of will to imagine a state of affairs in which access to a city was essentially unlimited. Provided overnight with that access, the citizens of such a city would be hard put to envisage a transport system in which the management was left to individual decision, and the selection of goods for transport was made a matter of free choice and even of whim. There would certainly appear to be something unreal and even improper in so "unregulated" a system. It is, however, the system under which transport is ordinarily conducted; the system in fact, under which in this country and Western Europe almost all affairs are conducted. Television is one of the few great exceptions. Under most circumstances it is a necessary exception, but it is my thesis that under certain special circumstances television, too, can enter the free market. It is the

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further thesis of this essay that those circumstances, reinforced by others which are themselves of considerable importance, are at present to be found in many areas of the United States.

Television stations or channels of communication?

The technology of television, as described above, was such that Television was able to establish itself by means of a kind of bootstrap operation. Without excessive capital outlays, organizations operating radio transmitters were able to put on the air a television signal even before there were enough television sets to provide a respectable audience. The existence of that signal encouraged householders to invest in sets; that investment, spread more or less evenly over the entire population, is the largest single form of capital investment in television. It can therefore be said that it was the economy of the signal which led, at the outset, to the establishment of Television within the society with such great speed.

From the beginning there was an alternative technology which could have provided, although at great initial cost, a television service superior in every important respect to open-circuit broadcasting. The signal that is carried through open space by electromagnetic radiation can also be carried within the confines of a coaxial cable. Transmission by coaxial cable is free from interference emanating out of electrical systems outside the system, and is equally free from "ghosts" caused by reflection from buildings and topographical features. What is equally as significant, transmission along one cable does not interfere with transmission along another, even if the two are maintained at the same frequency.

The importance of this latter characteristic of cable transmission is that the physical constraint on the number of signals that can be delivered from and into a given area is at once removed. The frequency assigned to Channel 12, for example, can be used over and over again for any number of signals, so long as each signal is restrained within its cable, and reasonable separation is maintained between cables. Such a system is in principle infinitely copious.

But such a signal is not in fact a "broadcast" signal. If the signal emanates from a central transmitter, a coaxial cable must connect that transmitter with every receiver at which the signal is to be picked up. The system as a whole resembles a telephone system with its grid of telephone wires, except that the coaxial cable is the equivalent of several hundred telephone lines, and hence is substantially more expensive to manufacture and install. The enormous economy with which a single open-circuit transmitter can reach every receiver within an area of thousands of square miles is immediately lost.

Economies in cable operation begin to appear only when the density of receivers is great. A mile of cable will connect a single

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receiver to a transmitter that is a mile away. But that same cable can be tapped by receivers all along its path, and if there is a receiver every hundred feet, the same mile of cable (together with shorter lengths of cable to make the taps) will serve fifty receivers. Reconstructed to form a network of cable, with each tap from the trunk cable serving many receivers, the cost of the mile of trunk cable can be distributed among thousands of users. In areas of extremely high population density, such as the inner cores of large cities, the cost of cable connection becomes so small as to be relatively insignificant. This economy of scale has led in recent years to the construction of just such cable systems within large cities, where for a few dollars a month the set owner can shift from open-circuit to cable reception and thereby improve measurably the quality of his picture.

These cable systems are intimately linked with the present Television system. Under normal circumstances they carry exactly the programs which are carried by the open-circuit stations in the vicinity. For the most part, they provide no new services. But this is by no means absolute. A cable carrying twelve channels is little more expensive to build and maintain than a channel carrying three or four, and as a result the installation of a coaxial cable confers excess capacity on the system. That capacity can be used in various ways, one of which was mentioned above, and in some areas it is so used. But most of the capacity remains idle.

In existing situations, there is very little incentive to use the idle capacity. By definition, the channels which are merely retransmitting programs carried by the open-circuit stations are providing the most popular Television programs, for that is exactly the business that the stations are in. Whatever sub-audiences may exist in the area are small, and whatever the dissatisfactions they may express, the harsh fact is that they are tolerant of—if not delighted with—ordinary television fare.

The general shape of the system plays a major part here. The only precedent for use of the idle channels is that provided by existing stations. Even in the absence of roadblocks which have been established by the Federal Communications Commission (which would be swept away at once if there were to develop any demand for use of the idle channels), the pattern for use which is fixed in the habits of the system would be toward the creation of a new station, providing programs in much the manner of the existing stations and supported by advertising revenues. There is no reason to believe that the great costs of such an operation could be met by revenues from a small sub-segment of the ordinary population—that sub-segment, for example, that wishes to watch drama, or news, or music as the staple of its Television diet.

There is thus created, in large cities, the odd situation in which the

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circumstances which led to the constraints on the number of channels have disappeared, but the constraints themselves endure. There were extremely good reasons, at one time, for New York to have only seven channels. (We can ignore, here, the development of UHF transmission which has effectively doubled that number.) Those reasons have long since vanished, but the number of channels—excluding those used for instructional and other special purposes—remains at seven.

New York could in fact enjoy the use of what may be considered essentially an infinite number of channels, for little cost, just as New York currently enjoys what is essentially an infinite number of telephones at little cost. It is important to refer once more to the distinction between television as a medium of communication and Television as we are accustomed to regard it. In terms of customary Television, New York at the moment has in all likelihood the maximum service it can afford, simply because there is no further audience to support an additional station operated on the scale of even the smallest independent. It is not further stations that New York can readily afford, but further *channels of communication.* The difference between the two must be kept firmly in mind. The question whether New York wants, needs, or can afford more television stations is not an issue. What might be asked is whether New York needs more channels of communication. And what can be said without hesitation is that if New York needs them, technology can provide them at once and at little cost.

It might be well to point out that the major part of the system is already in being. There is no practical limit to the number of channels that can be received on a conventional television receiver. Every receiver now in existence can be adjusted, at small cost, to receive twenty or forty or sixty or more channels than the three or seven or ten that it now is capable of receiving. That capital investment in the television set has already been made, and is constantly being renewed. And it will remain, under any circumstances, the largest of all the investments in television.

The instance of Bedford-Stuyvesant

It is within the limits of present-day technology to provide for such an area of New York City a far more copious communications structure, and at the same time it is at least questionable whether New York City, as a whole, stands in need of such a structure. But the doubts vanish if attention is fixed, not upon the city as a whole, but upon certain areas within the city.

Bedford-Stuyvesant is a section of Brooklyn covering 653 blocks and housing nearly 400,000 citizens grouped into 100,000 households. The population is predominantly Negro, of the lowest urban

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socioeconomic strata. Of the total, a relatively small percentage are second generation urban dwellers or more; the rest are either migrants from rural areas or the children of migrants.

Bedford-Stuyvesant is embedded in a larger community within which the various mass media are almost entirely at the service of the white middle class population. This is particularly true of Television, which by the very nature if its operations is obliged to ignore any minority group, and in particular a minority group which is deficient in purchasing power.

In principle, the printing press provides unbounded channels of communication for Bedford-Stuyvesant; in practice it is only of minor significance. The reason is not far to seek. The use of print as a device for communication is a habit which must be cultivated within a society, and it has never been cultivated within the societies from which the New York Negro migrated, nor is it measurably cultivated in the societies to which they have come. Illiteracy is high among urban Negroes, but even the literate are likely to be "functionally illiterate" in large numbers: they can read, but do not.

The consequence is that there exists, within Bedford-Stuyvesant, no pervasive medium of communications by means of which the entire community can address itself to its common problems, its common needs, and its common aspirations, nor is there any pervasive medium of communication by means of which the Bedford-Stuyvesant can organize to address the outside community or be addressed by it. Set down though it is within the country's largest city, and at the hub of the world's most elaborate communications complex, Bedford-Stuyvesant is none-the-less a community in isolation.

The consequences of such a situation are grave. It has disastrous effects, for example, on any attempt to erect responsible leadership within the area, for the responsible leader has no effective means of making contact with those whom he would lead. The way is left open for the streetcorner demagogue, communicating by means of hysteria and violence, incipient or real.

The economic consequences are equally significant. It is difficult to disseminate information concerning employment opportunities, either within the area or outside it. The local entrepreneur lacks means of advertising his wares or his services. One lively area of employment, communications itself, is almost entirely unexploited.

Important means of creative and emotional release are absent. The Negro musician, the Negro artist, the Negro writer must seek any large audience through the agency of the white world outside his community; he is cut off from any direct tie with that audience.

All these are consequences of a lack of an internal system of communications. They are not eliminated by any attempt to provide communications channels from outside. One cannot stimulate re-

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sponsible leadership within a community by providing in some arbitrary fashion a forum for discussion that is managed outside the community. The employment service operated by aliens appears far more like economic direction than economic aid. The aspiring entrepreneur can afford to operate only within his neighborhood while he is striving to build his business; he requires local media for his message.

Dollars and cents

For just such a community, cable television may provide an almost miraculous solution. For the functionally illiterate or the illiterate, it is the ideal medium of communications. The population density in Bedford-Stuyvesant makes it possible to envisage the installation of coaxial cable into every apartment at a price which is easily manageable. The receiving sets are already in place; some 90 per cent of all the households in the community already possess them. Specifically, a coaxial cable system capable of carrying twelve channels of wide-band signals could be installed in Bedford-Stuyvesant at a cost of a few millions of dollars. For this sum, cables could be laid that would connect each receiving set in Bedford-Stuyvesant to a central transmitting studio and that would provide also pick-up points within the community, other than the studio itself, from which signals could be transmitted over the system.

The ordinary operation of the receiving set would be unimpaired; all those television stations which it now receives by open circuit it would continue to receive by open circuit. Channels fed through the cable would all be received over an otherwise open channel—in New York, Channel 12 might be chosen. Thus the set would receive conventionally Channels 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 11, and 13 as it now does; in addition it could be tuned to Channel 12 where a coaxial selector would enable the viewer to choose among Channels 12A to 12L, all coming down the cable.

Maintenance cost of the system has been calculated at about twenty dollars per set per year. If the entire cost of the system is amortized over a period of ten years, the price per viewer works out to from five to ten dollars per year, exclusive of the cost of the receiving set.

These are maximum figures, for minimum service. It is difficult to believe that they cannot be reduced sharply over time, perhaps by a factor of three or more. In the immediate future, the capacity of the coaxial cable is likely to rise to twenty channels, and its cost to decrease. The cost of putting into place a double system, providing forty rather than twenty channels, is far short of twice the minimum cost. In practice, forty channels of this constitute a capacity wildly beyond anything the community could conceivably use: in informa-

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tion-carrying capacity they would be equivalent to providing every home with some 50,000 telephones.

None of this is in any sense visionary. The full technology is at hand for a twelve-channel system, and a larger system could be designed and built as quickly as funds were made available. The technology is fully mature. To erect in Bedford-Stuyvesant a multi-channel communications system which would operate through existing receivers would be child's play for any reasonably competent engineering company.

It is exactly at this point, however, that the practical man raises his inevitable objection. "To build the system may be simplicity itself," he says. "But how on earth would you program to fill twelve channels, let alone twenty or forty? What could you possibly hope to transmit that would occupy that much capacity, or even a tiny fraction of it? Where would the great sums of money come from to produce the programs?"

The early sections of this essay have sought to make it clear that the question, sensible although it may at first appear, is in fact totally irrelevant. It is not proposed that the channels be "filled" by "television programs." It is not proposed that the channels be "filled" at all. It is merely proposed that they be available. In later paragraphs, proposals will be made concerning their use. But these are not proposals for "programs" over twelve channels, in any customary sense of the word "programs."

Television channels and telephone wires

There is at hand a direct analogy. When the notion of installing telephone lines is first entertained, under any circumstances, it is not accompanied by any demand that the line be "filled," or that "programs" be designed to "fill" it. Rather, it is accepted that there are general categories of utility for a telephone line and that the existence of those categories will justify the cost of installing the telephone. It will be used when it is needed, and idle when it is not. There is no schedule of calls to be made, minute by minute, to utilize the total capacity. There is no one with central responsibility for managing its use, moment by moment throughout the day. It is a channel, and accepted as such, to be flowing when there is something to flow, and to be still when there is not.

The analogy is a sound one. Imagine, for example, that there was one and only one telephone line between Boston and Washington and that the line could carry one and only one message at a time. Such a line would be rigorously programmed, and it would be permanently in use. Strict time schedules would be allotted, by which for example Boston could talk to New York between 9:18:20 and 9:25:30; New York to Boston at similarly prescribed times;

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Wilmington to New Brunswick for perhaps only a minute or two on every third day. What is more, it would be worthwhile to labor for a full day to prepare a conversation, so that the few moments of actual telephone time would be utilized with maximum efficiency. And if, at the end of a generation of such stringently limited service, it were to be proposed that a thousand or a million such lines be erected between the two terminal points, practical men would ask: But how would all these lines be filled? And who would pay the enormous costs of preparing all those conversations for maximum efficiency? And perhaps most telling of all: Are you seriously suggesting that you would permit use of the telephone merely so a love-sick teenager in Providence could exchange words of calf love with a silly girl in Silver Springs? But that is just how the telephone is used, and no one thinks it odd. It is, of course, not odd. A channel of communication is for use in communicating; if it is a low-cost channel, it does not really matter very much what is being communicated, for it all serves one social purpose or another.

Once more it must be stressed: this essay proposes the erection of channels of communication. It does not propose "Television for Bedford-Stuyvesant." Much of that is already provided by commercial open-circuit television; more could be provided, if that were held to be desirable, by buying or borrowing time on commercial or noncommercial television, or by establishing a station in and for Bedford-Stuyvesant. But that is not the issue here, for such provision would leave the communications needs of the area essentially unchanged. What is suggested here is the provision of means by which extensive mass communication can be carried on within the area and across its boundaries.

An operating structure

Assuming that a communications system such as that described might be created within an area such as Bedford-Stuyvesant, it is necessary to devise means of operating and maintaining it. Many operating structures might be designed: the one which will be set forth here is intended merely to suggest some of the problems that would arise and the mechanisms that might handle them.

It is proposed that a nonprofit corporation be created to manage and operate the system. Membership in the corporation would be drawn from the community. The corporation would own the coaxial cable and other associated equipment and would manage the terminal equipment by means of which the cable would be fed. It would be charged with maintaining the equipment. Its principal task, however, would be the provision of access to the system.

The governing assumption would be that the preparation of materials for transmission over the system would be provided by

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those who wish to utilize the system. Preparation, in its most general sense, involves the creation of a signal which can be televised: this is done by means of television cameras in several manners. The signal can be fed from the camera into the system directly; it can be taken by the camera from motion picture film and thence fed into the system; it can be fed by the camera into tape storage and from the tape into the system. Whatever the case, it would be the responsibility of the user of the system to make the necessary arrangements (although as will be seen below one might expect the corporation to offer certain services at a fee).

Initially, estimates would be made of the costs of operating and maintaining the system, and some kind of fee basis established which would ultimately permit the corporation to recover, from users, its annual basic costs. At the outset, of course, fees would not cover expenses. The fee system would initially be an estimate, and would be subject to correction both as experience accumulated and as use of the system increased and idle time diminished.

The corporation would bring into being studios and other facilities for the origination of communications. These, too, would be available to users at a fee.

As a general rule, the corporation would make its system available, at appropriate fees, to any potential user much as a printing press is made available. Provided that the applicant was of ordinary good standing in the community and that his projected use of the facilities was consistent with good taste, good judgment, the laws, and the general spirit of the community, use of the system would be made available at the customary schedule of fees. Since it is to be expected that the system would have at almost all times excess capacity, the problem of choosing between potential users would rarely arise; when it did arise, however, the corporation would make its decision on the basis of normal criteria: the order in which application was made, its own durable relationships with potential users, and the needs of the community as it sees them in its own best judgment.

The corporation would be prepared further to use its good offices in several ways. During the initial period of operation, it would stand prepared to aid potential users to organize their own efforts, and to bring them to fruition. Thus the corporation itself might seek out persons within the community prepared to organize and maintain some kind of employment service over the channels, and might assist in the early stages of such an enterprise by providing expert advice in both preparation and presentation of materials. The corporation would also stand ready to assist in the raising of money for preparation and presentation of materials, such funds to be sought from the government, from private foundations, and from individuals. It would be expected, however, that under normal

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circumstances the user of the facilities would be responsible over the long term for financing those activities.

It is also to be expected that materials would be simple and inexpensively prepared. The elaborate "programs" of commercial Television are rarely appropriate for the kinds of use suggested here; a camera and a speaker, or even upon occasion a camera trained upon a teletype, will often be all that is necessary. If it is protested that such materials are not "telegenic," it should be stressed once again that this is not a Television system but a communication system and that for the most part it is intended not to attract and hold an audience, but to serve its users.

Use of the facilities for advertising would be encouraged, and the corporation would expect to share in the fees for such use. It might well be that the corporation itself would seek to stimulate the use of at least one channel in accordance with conventional Television practices, establishing it as a closed-circuit Television station which would provide a full-time schedule of news information, entertainment, and advertising. Presumably such an activity would itself be established as an ordinary or a nonprofit corporation in its own right, operating independently of the corporation that manages the facilities and paying to it appropriate fees for its use of the channel.

It is to be expected that government organizations would seek to make full use of the facilities. Among such organizations, one might expect the Board of Welfare and the various Boards of Education to make most effective use of the facilities, for which they would of course pay appropriate fees. Other users might include public health services, consumer services, and the police. There are also obvious opportunities for agencies serving the very young and very old. Initially, the corporation might find it necessary to stimulate such use by its own efforts; it is to be presumed that in time the most effective users would come to depend upon the system.

Because there is no constraint imposed by limited channels, there will be no need to judge users on the popularity of their efforts. Should the Board of Education, for example, be willing to pay its fee simply in order to reach a few thousand or even a few hundred illiterates, or those in need of special job training, there can be no possible objection to such use. The individual who might wish to rent a channel for thirty minutes so that he might make a speech would be quite free to do so, whether he was using the time and facilities to seek political office, to comment on the news, or to defend Bacon's authorship of Shakespeare's plays. He would, of course, in none of those cases have any assurance that anyone was tuned to him.

The set-owner would merely have access to new channels. The use made of that access would be entirely up to the set-owner.

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Those with the skill and the finances to make great efforts toward popular acceptance might, if their skills matched their intentions, win great audiences. That would be their privilege, and any rewards from their success would be theirs to enjoy. It might turn out that the channel utilized by the Board of Education went totally unmatched: that would be the concern of the Board of Education, and not of the corporation.

Why not?

It is clear that the corporation would need, initially, a fair amount of venture capital. Over the first few years of the system it is highly unlikely that revenues would match costs; to aim initially for full recovery costs would only prevent development of the system. It would only be if and when the system proved both useful and workable that there might be an expectation that it would be on a self-sustaining basis. It should be considered possible, however, that in time it would become in fact a profitable system, deriving from its fees—even at minimum figures—far more than it expends. This would be a delightful outcome, and would raise only trivial problems that would become a pleasure to solve.

At the same time, it might well be that the system as a whole would prove unnecessary. In such a case, it would vanish quietly. The proposal here is truly that an experiment be undertaken; the proposal is made because it appears likely that the experiment would be useful. If it should be successful, a major contribution will have been made toward the solution of the problems of every major Negro ghetto in the country. It is not an expensive experiment, and it appears to be well worth pursuing.

Simply as a footnote, it might be stated that this proposal does not attempt to take into account the parallel technologies that might be served by the simple existence of the system, nor the technologies that are now in the course of development. The capacity built into the system has tremendous possibilities for data transmission and data processing, and might be of considerable interest to industrial and commercial enterprises looking for favorable new locations. Future technology may make possible facsimile transmission to the home and two-way communications uses that would in most cases be dependent upon the creation of a system of this sort. These are to be considered fringe benefits that might emerge from the institution of the system proposed here.

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Economics and Social Policy

The New Deal, it might be said, was fashioned by lawyers. It was they who created and staffed the new regulatory agencies, which sought to limit private power in the society. By the same token, the Great Society is the "age of the economist." One finds economists not only at the center of economic policy, in the Council of Economic Advisers, but also as important formulators of policy in the Departments of Defense, HEW, and HUD, and even as analysts of the status of the performing arts.

The influence of economists in the "world after Keynes" is, in one respect, understandable. Every economy in the world today is managed to some degree or other by government intervention, which in turn needs expert advice. What is less clear is the role of economists in almost every other area of social policy. To some extent it comes from a redefinition by economists of their domain so as to include almost the entire range of human concerns. (Thus, Sir Eric Roll, the former adviser to the British Treasury, has defined economics as "the activity which is directed to the satisfaction of man's wants . . . whether these wants arise from biological, psychological, social or other compulsions.") On a more mundane level, one can say that the economist is the engineer of rationality in all modern complex societies. It is the economist who is trained to deal with maximization and optimization, the two techniques which are the foundations of efficiency.

But economists have also come under fire for this new "imperialism." In England Michael Postan (writing in Encounter*) has denounced the "plague of economists," who, in blunderbuss fashion, have sought economic solutions to what are essentially noneconomic problems. And cost-benefit analysis is accused of seeking, too often, to measure the unmeasurable.*

The three articles that follow explore this new and troubled domain of the economist. Harry G. Johnson, Professor of Economics both at the University of Chicago and The London School of Economics, explains how economic thinking has moved into noneconomic fields. Carl Kaysen, an economist who was formerly with the National Security Council and is now the Director of the Institute of Advanced Study, Princeton, N.J., deals with the economist as the adviser on public policy. And Mancur Olson, Jr., also an economist, who is a deputy assistant secretary at the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, describes the problems involved in composing a social report which may parallel for the noneconomic sectors of our society the existing Economic Report of the Council of Economic Advisers—Eds.

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The economic approach to social questions

HARRY G. JOHNSON

ONCE upon a time—long ago now—it was possible to refer anyone who wanted to find out what economic theory had to say about society and its problems to Marshall's classic *Principles of Economics*. There he could find the structure of economic theory spelled out in a language comprehensible to the average businessman. (Even when I went up to Cambridge in 1945, the myth still prevailed that "it is all mercifully in Marshall.") That situation has been revolutionized, as a result of the introduction of geometrical and mathematical methods of theoretical investigation in the 1930's, and of the post-war emphasis on the measurement of economic relationships. Economic theory is now written in set theory, mathematical models, and regression results, with the consequence that it seems to be too abstruse and remote from reality, as well as too technical, to be of any interest or use to the nonspecialist concerned with understanding and improving the world in which he lives. Yet economics remains essentially a *social* science, concerned to further our understanding of society, and the great advance of economic science that has occurred in the past thirty-odd years has made it *more* and not less capable of illuminating social questions. This, at least, is what I hope to suggest—necessarily in very broad and sketchy terms—in this article.

Economists have, of course, always expressed themselves freely on social questions, though their views have rarely been popular

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among the rest of the educated elite. It was, indeed, the insistence of the classical economists and their followers on the inevitability of the consequences of Malthus' (fallacious) theory of population growth that earned the discipline, in the nineteenth century, the title of "the dismal science"; and their general endorsement of *laissez-faire*, however qualified, remains to this day an active source of intellectual suspicion of economists' views on economic and social policy. This conservative and "negative" role of economists in public discussion of economic policy was sharply reversed by the Keynesian Revolution, which put the economist in the unaccustomed position of arguing, not that economic choices were constrained by limitation of resources, but that the *resource constraint believed to exist by the politicians and the public did not in fact hold*, so that it was possible to have more of every good thing simultaneously. This reversal of roles was, however, temporary. Once the Keynesian lessons about how to maintain full employment had been learned, economics had to become once again, in the classic statement of Lionel Robbins, "the science which studies human behaviour as a relationship between ends and scarce means which have alternative uses"; for in a fully employed economy, total productive capacity again becomes a binding constraint on economic choice. In other words, the problems of predominant concern in contemporary economic and social policy are those that preoccupied the earlier welfare economists (e.g., A. C. Pigou)—economic welfare and public finance—rather than the problem of unemployment that preoccupied Keynes.

It is, in fact, arguable that economics has perhaps suffered from basking too long in the reflected glory of Keynes's great intellectual achievement. Economic theorizing, research, and policy discussion have tended to be excessively concerned with "macro-economic" problems—theoretical models of economic growth, empirical studies of general price and wage levels behavior, prescriptions for speeding growth without encountering balance-of-payments problems—to the neglect of the "micro-economic" problems of efficient resource allocation, whose solutions are likely over the long run to be more important to the achievement of a highly productive and rapidly growing economy. In a fully employed economy, the main concern of economic theory is with these micro-economic problems of allocation of scarce resources among competing uses, such uses being defined to include provision for the satisfaction of *future* needs.

What does the apparatus of thought that economists have developed for this purpose have to contribute to the understanding and resolution of broader social questions? I shall develop my answer in three stages: first, a brief general statement; second, a discussion of some of the new concepts and approaches that economic theorists have found useful in their own work, and which have a more

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general application; and third, examination of an example drawn from recent experience and public debate in Great Britain.

I

The general statement can most conveniently begin with Robbins' definition of economics as the study of the allocation of scarce means among given ends. Following Robbins further, one can distinguish between *positive economics,* which is concerned with how the economy actually works, and *normative economics,* which is concerned with how the economy should be made to work to maximize the social welfare.

On the positive side, the central concept of economics is that of a system by which the resources of the economy are allocated in production, distribution, and exchange by the interactions of the decisions of individual economic units in an interrelated network of markets. In formal theory, the economic units are usually identified as households, which demand goods and supply factors of production, and firms, which supply goods and demand factors of production. The essence of the concept of an allocative economic system is the interdependence of the separate parts, which implies that a change in conditions in any part of the system—whether occurring autonomously or resulting from changes in governmental policy—will set up repercussions that will reverberate to a greater or lesser extent throughout the whole.

This concept of an interdependent system, in which the quantities and prices reflect a balancing of opposing forces, is a powerful engine of clarification of economic relationships and phenomena, and its usefulness extends well beyond the confines of economics proper. In relation to social questions, it has two important implications: that things are the way they are for some powerful reason or reasons, which have to be understood if effective social solutions are to be devised; and that any solutions so devised and applied will have repercussions elsewhere, which will have to be faced, and which ought to be taken into account.

Means, ends, and choice

On the normative side, the more generally applicable concepts of economic theory are associated with the distinction between means and ends, and the problem of choice implicit in the concept of allocation of scarce resources. The distinction between means and ends is of course relative to circumstances—what are means in one context may be ends in another, and vice versa—but it is nevertheless an important distinction for clarity of thought. Much of the work of economists concerned with policy issues is devoted to sorting out

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the true ends of policy from the means intended to achieve these ends, and to assessing the relevance and relative efficiencies of the various means proposed—in short, to determining what the problem really is, and attempting to evaluate the various ways of solving it. This sort of clarification is even more necessary, and useful, with respect to broader social questions, where means all too frequently become mistaken for ends and are defended (or attacked) with hot emotion on that basis. For example, most people would accept the general proposition that anyone who is qualified and willing to go to a university should have the opportunity to do so. But to insist, as many do, that to this end all university education should be provided free of charge is to guarantee that, given the limited public funds available to be spent on university education facilities, the number trained at this level and the quality of the training they receive will both be lower than would be achieved by alternative means of financing higher education.

This example already introduces the second relevant concept, the concept of choice. The concept has two major facets. The first is the *fact* of choice, or more precisely the recognition of alternative ways of achieving a given end. The second facet is the *process* of choice, which involves the concept of differing costs and returns attaching to alternative courses of action, and of choice as the process of weighing up returns against costs and selecting the alternative with the largest net benefit (or highest benefit-cost ratio). The notions that there are always alternatives, that they have costs as well as benefits, and that there are scientific procedures available to assist the making of choices are extremely important guides to any rational discussion of social questions.

II

After this very general preliminary statement, I turn to recent developments in economic theory that have significant implications for broader social questions. Six such developments seem to me of outstanding importance; the first two relate to the "robustness"—as the jargon now has it—of fundamental theoretical principles, and the treatment of social values in operational economics; the other four involve new approaches to the economics of labor, of time, of information, and of government.

The "robustness" of a theory means the extent to which its conclusions survive under changes in the assumptions from which it is derived. In the 1930's, in the heyday of concern with imperfect or monopolistic competition, it came to be widely believed that the conclusions of neo-classical economic analysis were crucially dependent on a long list of "unrealistic" assumptions, such as perfect knowledge, perfect competition, and rational profit-maximization

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on the part of economic decision-makers. It became quite a popular professional sport to belabor economists working in the neo-classical tradition for the lack of realism of their assumptions. The subsequent rise of "positive" economics (associated with Lionel Robbins and Milton Friedman) has shifted the emphasis from anxiety about the reality or plausibility of the assumptions to testing the robustness of the conclusions of a theory, a test which may be conducted either by empirical estimation or by theoretical investigation; and the results have almost invariably been to confirm and strengthen the main propositions of neo-classical theory. Thus it has been shown, for example, that imperfect competition theory yields virtually no testable positive predictions that might be inconsistent with the theory of pure competition; that whether firms consciously seek to maximize profits and minimize costs or not, competition will eliminate the inefficient firms; and that whether consumer behavior is rational or purely random, the demand curves for products will tend to slope downward as in the Marshallian analysis. In consequence, it is possible for economists to treat the economy as an interdependent system, responding to change according to certain general principles of a rational kind, with considerably more confidence than appeared justifiable thirty years ago.

With regard to the treatment of value judgments in economics, the neo-classical tradition, as already mentioned, carried a strong presumption in favor of *laissez-faire* as the policy required to maximize economic welfare. That presumption was destroyed by Lionel Robbins' *The Nature and Significance of Economic Science*. The "new welfare economics," which emerged rapidly in response to Robbins' challenge, has made economists much more aware of the pervasiveness and relevance of value judgments in economic analysis and prescription, and much more careful about treating them explicitly. It is true that in the hands of some practitioners the new welfare economics amounts to no more than the unhelpful insistence that nothing can be said about the welfare effects of economic changes except under extremely stringent conditions never fulfilled in practical situations. But among more work-a-day economists, the practical impact has been recognition of the legitimacy of alternative systems of values, and willingness to analyze economic problems and make policy prescriptions in terms of whichever values are posed to them. This replacement of dogmatism by pragmatism in the treatment of values in economic analysis has been further encouraged by the development of the "economics of second-best"—largely the creation of James Meade, Richard Lipsey, and Kelvin Lancaster at the London School of Economics—which starts from the recognition that the world is an imperfect place and that most policy problems involve changes that will leave it an imperfect place, and which has established the central proposition

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that whether such changes are for the better or for the worse depends on the detailed circumstances of the individual case and cannot be settled on a priori grounds.

The two developments just described, which may for short be summarized as increased professional confidence and decreased ideological dogmatism, pertain to the general approach of economists toward the problems that confront them. I turn now to new developments and insights of analytical economics that have made it a more useful and illuminating guide to the understanding of contemporary society. As already mentioned, I consider four such developments to be of particular importance.

"Human capital"

The first of these is the development of a new approach to the economics of labor—more broadly, the economics of the role of human beings in the productive process—based on the concept of "human capital." According to this concept, the skilled (or even the so-called "unskilled") worker and the academically or professionally trained executive are envisaged as particular types of capital equipment employed in the production process, in the sense that their capacity to make a contribution to the productive process is developed by a process of investment (which means simply the sacrifice of current resources for future returns) incurred in the formal education system and through on-the-job training and that this investment yields its returns over the lifetime of the individual concerned.

The concept of human capital has tremendous integrative power, in that it provides a unifying principle for the consistent explanation of many phenomena of the labor market. Perhaps its most fundamental implication, from the point of view of social thought, is that the worker in an advanced industrial economy is typically a very considerable capitalist. This is reflected, on the side of consumption behavior, in widespread installment-plan purchasing, which amounts to borrowing on the security of human capital. On the side of production behavior, it is reflected in many aspects of trade union policy, which can be explained as efforts to increase the returns on past investments in human capital or to protect such investments against the inroads of competition. It should be added that the motive of protection explains many of the restrictive practices of professional bodies and associations, which frequently serve either to restrict entry or to prevent competition among qualified practitioners from reducing the price of professional services.

A second implication, which is extremely relevant to the broad question of social and economic inequality, is that the economic rewards for alternative occupations and careers need to be compared

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in terms of lifetime income profiles, and not in terms of the highest annual income earned in the course of the career. Typically, careers that are based on little education yield earnings that begin at a relatively high level early in adult life and rise slowly to a peak somewhere in middle age, whereas careers based on much education yield earnings that begin at a relatively lower level rather later in adult life but rise much more rapidly to a much higher peak. The contrasting nature of the two profiles reflects the economics of investment. To measure the inequality of incomes by reference to peak incomes only may give a quite misleading picture of the relative lifetime income streams offered by the two careers—though this is the practice of most political radicals and the basis of most income tax systems. As a concrete example, university students like to think of themselves, and to have public policy consider them, as a subdivision of the deserving poor, whereas in terms of lifetime income prospects they are, by the very fact of having reached university, destined almost inevitably to earn incomes well in excess of the national average; on the other hand, there is a pronounced general tendency to regard medical practitioners as being grossly overpaid, though the exceptional length of their training period both entails extra investment (largely foregone income) and shortens the working life during which that investment can be recouped.

A third implication, also relevant to the question of inequality, is that in their choices among alternative possible careers, new entrants to the labor force face the same problems of assembling information, assessing risks, evaluating returns, and obtaining the resources for investment as do prospective investors in material capital equipment or in stocks and shares. The main focus of social policy in this connection has been the limitation of educational opportunity among the children of the poorer classes. But even given adequate opportunity, children (or their parents) may arrive at different educational decisions as a result of differences in the information available on the returns to education, differing preferences for immediate as compared with future income and consumption, or differing willingness to undertake investments with a risky future outcome. Differences in educational decisions owing to differences in information constitute a social problem but different decisions due to differences in time preference or willingness to undertake risks, though they may produce similar variations in the distribution of income, do not constitute a problem of inequality in any comparable sense.

The cost of time

The second important new development in economic analysis is the treatment of time as the fundamental unit of cost in individual

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allocative decisions with respect to both labor and consumption. This conception is to be distinguished sharply from the classical treatment of labor time used up in production as the determinant of economic value, and its usefulness derives from the characteristics of the affluent modern economy in which the typical consumer has a standard of living far above mere subsistence and is constantly required to choose among competing consumer goods. The central principle of the analysis is that in reality each consumer good has two prices attached to it—a money price, as in the traditional theory of consumer choice, and a time cost of acquiring and consuming the commodity. The money price is, however, resolvable into the work time required to earn it, so that consumption and labor-supply decisions are both facets of the allocation of time, the individual's basic resource. To complete the concept, it is necessary to recognize that work time may itself be a form of consumption, in the sense that the individual may derive enjoyment from the exercise of his skills and knowledge.

The most interesting implications of this approach relate to the effects of technical improvements that raise the potential standard of living. Such improvements will tend to reduce the supply of labor, and the measured growth rate of the economy, if their predominant effect is to lower the cost of equipment for time-consuming leisure activities; television is probably an outstanding case in point. Over the long run of industrial history, technical progress has been predominantly of this type, as reflected in the shortening of working hours and lengthening of holidays; but it is an interesting fact that the rapid economic growth of Japan in the post-war period has apparently been accompanied by no reduction in working hours, the Japanese thus far preferring to spend their rising potential incomes on commodities rather than leisure. This illustrates the alternative possibility, that technical improvements will tend to increase the supply of labor if they reduce the time-consuming leisure by substituting manufactured equipment—consumers' capital goods—for human labor time. While it is stretching a point to classify housewifery as a leisure activity, there is no doubt that the increasing participation of women in the labor force has been greatly facilitated by the increasing availability of time-and-labor-saving electrical and gas-powered equipment.

The time-allocation approach to the theory of consumption and labor supply also suggests some intriguing speculations—I would call them no more than that—about a problem that has concerned many people in Britain for many years, namely the reasons for the country's relatively slow rate of economic growth and general lack of "economic dynamism." Given the great gap that exists between the standard of living in the United States and the rest of the world, one might suppose that the problem of raising the standard of

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living in the rest of the world is mainly one of imitation and emulation—which has in fact been the Japanese solution. What has impeded Britain from adopting that solution? Economic analysis suggests that the answer is to be looked for in two factors: household preferences and household opportunities. As regards preferences, there is deeply ingrained in the culture of the country, largely as a consequence of the experiences of World War II, a certain contempt for material comfort, and a propensity to take pride in the practice of "make do and mend"; these attitudes have great survival value, but provide little encouragement to deliberate striving for material improvement. As regards opportunities, the structure of incentives created by high income and excise taxation on the one hand, and the cheap social services on the other, undoubtedly biases the choices of British consumers toward leisure-time-intensive activities. The difference is exemplified by two generalizations drawn from personal observation: whereas Americans are happy to tell you about the efficient gadgetry or the high cost of their housing, Britons bask in the age or the cheapness of theirs; and whereas Americans will tell you in detail why they bought one brand of household equipment rather than another, Britons will explain precisely why they chose one continental country rather than another to spend their vacation in.

The cost of information

The third important new development in economics is the recognition that the information required for the making of choices is not a free good, but has a cost of acquisition that may not be worth paying. In view of the cost of acquiring the requisite information, relative to its value in improving the outcome of the decision-making process, it is natural to expect that many decisions, even some quite important ones, will be taken on the basis of extremely fragmentary information, or by rules of thumb, or on the basis of information provided in persuasive capsule form by parties interested in influencing the outcome of decisions. I use the term parties advisedly, since the practice of economizing on the acquisition of relevant information is at least as characteristic of political as it is of economic activity. The fact that decisions are so frequently taken in this sort of way is generally regarded, in the neo-classical tradition of economic theory, in which knowledge is assumed to be costless, as a reflection of the irrationality, or gullibility-cum-rapacity, of man in a capitalist economic system. It is, on the contrary, a manifestation of rationality in a situation in which the decisions that have to be taken are increasingly numerous, multiplying as incomes rise, while time is short and increasingly valuable. Two important implications for social questions are that the pro-

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duction and distribution of information relevant to consumption choices is a necessary part of the activities of the economic system, not merely a wasteful excrescence of it; and that the economizing process will ensure that information is provided and acted on in a form falling far short of the standard that would be exacted by academic scholarship.

An economic theory of democracy

The fourth important new development in economic analysis is the emergence of an economic theory of political democracy. Following Bentham, the neo-classical tradition of economic theory has tended to look on government as the impartial servant of the public good. This is a necessary assumption of political debate, but it leaves unexplained much of the actual activity and policy of government, as well as generating endless frustration among social scientists interested in public policy who take the assumption seriously. The economic theory of democracy regards the election process as one in which policies are exchanged for votes, with parties attempting to maximize their chances of re-election by appropriate choice of policies in an environment in which information about the consequences of alternative policies is highly imperfect and in which the average voter has little economic incentive to acquire the amount of information necessary for intelligent voting, because his individual vote will make a negligible difference to the outcome of the elections. This theory explains, not only the tendency of the programs of the parties in a two-party democracy to become virtually indistinguishable—which is a long-recognized implication of the theory of duopoly—but also such phenomena as the role of stereotypes in political ideology, the influence of pressure groups, and the dominance of producer over consumer interests in the actual formation of public policy.

This last point is one of the important general findings of the economic theory of democracy. Political representation is based on residence; and producer interests are far more concentrated, and hence worth spending more time and money to protect, than consumer interests. Hence the political process is inherently conservative, in the sense that it is strongly biased toward the preservation of what exists rather than the promotion of change and development.

One of the outstanding unresolved issues in the economic theory of democracy is whether the political process tends to under-allocate or to over-allocate resources to governmental activities. John Kenneth Galbraith is in no doubt on this matter: he contrasts the private affluence with the public squalor of contemporary society. This alleged tendency toward under-spending on public goods can easily be rationalized by reference to the aversion of the public

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toward paying higher taxes, and the difficulty of persuading it that increased public spending on social amenities and social services will yield a longer run pay-off, in terms of a more pleasant and comfortable social life and a reduced necessity for social expenditure on preventative and salvage operations. On the other hand, the theory of coalitions, in game theory, suggests a tendency toward over-allocation to government activities, on the grounds that a majority agreed on a particular item of social expenditure can by coalitions force the minority to bear part of the cost of that expenditure. My own view, which I have not the time to develop in full, is that neither general proposition is correct, but that instead the governmental process tends to under-allocate resources in some directions and over-allocate them in others. Specifically, government tends to over-allocate resources to activities that can be justified by a vague but persuasive national purpose, and with respect to which it can plausibly rely on the advice of its own experts, such as national defense, the support of investment and research and development activities in established national industries, and the promotion of prestigious "basic scientific research." But it tends to under-allocate resources to public amenities, the social services, and the relief of poverty, because for such items of public expenditure the social return is nebulous and problematical to the average citizen, while the private cost to the taxpayer—and especially the fact that the cost is incurred largely for the benefit of others—is all too clear.

The "brain drain"

I now turn to the application of economic principles to social questions. For this purpose I have selected an example drawn from public discussion in Great Britain during the past year or so, with which to illustrate what economics has to contribute to the understanding of social questions. I refer to the alleged problem of the "brain drain" from Britain.

It may be remarked at the outset that seldom has so much unreasoning emotion been ventilated on the basis of so few hard facts: as Brinley Thomas has pointed out, the data required to determine whether Britain is a net loser or a net gainer of brains, and the magnitudes of the relevant flows, just do not exist. Economic analysis does suggest, however, that the so-called "brain drain" is part of a more general international movement of human capital in search of better opportunities, one aspect of the mobility of labor. From a cosmopolitan point of view, it presumably contributes to a more efficient allocation of world economic resources. The common assumption that the "brain drain" involves a loss to the country of emigration must therefore rest on a particular, nationalistic, definition of economic welfare in terms of the income generated within a

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politically delineated geographical area, rather than in terms of the economic welfare of individuals born in that area, some of whom presumably emigrate in order to improve their standards of living.

Recent analysis of the economics of the "brain drain" by Professor Thomas and others does, however, indicate one possible source of loss when economic welfare is measured on an individualistic basis, which is particularly relevant to the British case; this possibility is especially interesting because it entails one of the fine points of the economics of investment in the formation of human capital. The economic theory of on-the-job training distinguishes between two types of skills that may be so acquired: general skills, which are transferable to other firms or industries in the economy, and skills which are specific to the individual firm providing the training. For the former, general type of training, the competitive economics of the situation will necessitate apprenticeship or other arrangements under which the worker will bear the cost of the training, since if the employer bore the cost he could not be sure of recouping his expense. For the latter, specific, type of training, either the worker may pay the costs of training and later receive the full value of his contribution to production, or the employer may pay the costs and recoup the expense subsequently out of an excess of the worker's productive contribution over his wage, depending on the relative certainty of the commitment of the employer and the employee respectively to the contract for future employment. The relevance of this piece of labor-market analysis to the "brain drain" problem is that in the modern world a university education is an internationally transferable item of human capital; *but* in Britain educational policy makes the state bear the cost of it, while the nation relies on a combination of state administration of low salary scales for educated people, and steeply progressive income taxation, to recoup the cost. The implication of this inconsistency of policy is that either public opinion in Britain will have to become accustomed to a steady outflow of native talent, compensated to a greater or lesser extent by an inflow of talent from poorer countries, as part of the cost of current education and income-determination policies, or else policy will have to be changed so as (1) to increase the share of the cost of education that is borne by the student, and (2) to decrease the share of the higher productive capacity created by education that is now absorbed by the community through the fixing of low salary scales and the imposition of heavily progressive income taxation. The latter alternative obviously has the more to recommend it, if one seriously entertains the long-run objective of reducing inequality by increasing the proportion of the population that receives higher education. But if one really wishes to do something about the "brain drain," the alternatives posed by economic analysis are clear, and the choice will have to be made.

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Model-makers and decision-makers: economists and the policy process

CARL KAYSEN

WHAT are the relations, ideal and real, between economic analysis and the processes of policy formation in government? What are the corresponding relations between economists and policy-makers?

In recent years, a formal theory—a model theory, one might say, at the risk of flippancy—of economic policy has grown up, largely under the intellectual leadership of Jan Tinbergen and his collaborators in Holland. Perhaps its most sophisticated version is that presented by H. Theil, in *Economic Forecasts and Policy* (1958). The central feature of this theory is a complete formal model of the economic system under consideration, on the basis of which its present state can be described and its future evolution forecast at least over the time horizon relevant to the policy decisions in question. The variables of this system are divided into two classes: (1) controlled variables or "instruments," the value of which the

This article is a slightly condensed version of a paper delivered at a symposium in honor of Adolph Lowe, at the New School for Social Research, Winter 1968. It will be included along with other papers given at that symposium in Robert L. Heilbroner, ed., Economic Means and Social Ends *(New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, forthcoming)—Eds.*

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policy-maker can determine directly within some constraints, and (2) uncontrolled variables, which can be influenced only indirectly through the policy-maker's choice of instrument variables. Some subset of all the variables are "the targets," whose values the policy-maker seeks to influence. It is assumed that he has the capacity to specify the relative desirability of alternate combinations of the target variables—i.e., that he has a "utility function" which can be inserted into the appropriate equations. The policy-maker's problem then becomes the choice of instrument variables that will result in the maximization of the utility function, subject to the constraints imposed by the system.

Although a policy model of this general type can in principle be constructed for any economic policy problem, in practice this approach has developed in the context of short-run macroeconomic stabilization policy—i.e., the policy governing the extent of unemployment, the rate of inflation or deflation, etc. This is to be expected: it is in this area of policy that economic analysis has made its largest contribution in the last two decades—if not indeed in its whole history—and that the possibility of successful policy has been intimately dependent in detail on the technical quality of the economics available to the policy-makers. It is also in this area that the political significance of economic policy is greatest, and political decision-makers accordingly most sensitive to the possibilities of finding help.

Conceptually, in terms of a model of this kind, the role of the economist and that of the policy-maker can be sharply distinguished. The policy-maker has to specify his utility function, showing what values he places on various alternative combinations of target variables; he may also specify constraints on the range (or even admissibility) of particular instrument variables. After he does so, the rest of the job belongs to the economists and econometricians, and in theory is a politically neutral one. Theil, indeed, characterizes this separation in colorful terms when he talks of the "decision animal" and the "information animal."

The role of ideology

The task of building usable forecasting models is both intellectually and practically difficult. However, enough progress is being made in dealing with these difficulties to encourage the profession to its best efforts. It is precisely this combination of intellectual difficulty and some success in dealing with it that characteristically stimulates scientific efforts. And this stimulus surely is further reinforced both by the degree to which the task does appear to be politically neutral, and by the fact that it is demanding enough of the specialized skills and training of the economist so that the signifi-

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cance of his contribution to it—in contrast with the contributions of general wisdom by politicians and men of affairs—is clear to all.

This model of policy-making for short-run macroeconomic problems stands in sharp contrast with the character of economic policy advice in more traditional areas, such as the "classical" problems of free trade vs. protection; equity and efficiency in taxation; monopoly, competition, governmental privilege, and interference in the market. Typically, in these cases, economists offer advice within a partial rather than a general framework, and, on the whole, much more in qualitative than in quantitative terms. These characteristics are not all logically inevitable; they reflect in part historical and present limitations on conceptual tools in relation to the difficulty of the problems and the data available. To some extent these are underdeveloped areas of analysis to which the newer conceptual and statistical technology of economics is just beginning to be applied. However, many of the intellectual intractabilities involved lie very deep indeed, and may simply prove to be insoluble in the terms in which they are usually posed. Thus, the total inability of welfare economics to say anything cogent about "second-best" alternatives, where the usual allocative conditions for optimality cannot all be met, is a pervasive limitation on well-specified quantitative policy models for problems in all the areas listed above; and it does not appear likely to yield quickly to new ideas.

The striking fact, however, is that these limitations have done little or nothing to inhibit economists from giving policy advice on this range of problems. In fact, the opposite is the case. The absence of all the difficulties and obvious limitations of models involving checkable, quantitative forecasts appears to lead to vigorous and confident policy prescriptions, and, indeed, to a wide degree of professional agreement on them. All, or nearly all, respectable economists are for freer trade and more competition, though few or none are prepared to estimate the gains from some specific reduction in trade barriers while other substantial barriers remain, or the value of increasing the degree of competition in some sectors of the economy while accepting as inevitable a high degree of market power in other sectors.

In both these cases, the confidence of economists' policy recommendations is essentially ideological: it rests on their commitment to the competitive market as an ideal, and the consequent belief that any step in the direction of the ideal is desirable. This is, in my judgment, the main ingredient of economists' policy recommendations on these points. But it is clearly not the only one. There are in addition more direct and self-conscious political grounds for preferring more to less competitive domestic markets, and less to more restricted international trade—i.e., arguments articulated in terms of political liberty rather than economic efficiency. Typically,

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however, these are not the arguments offered by the majority of the profession.

The role of the economist in policy formation in these areas is almost diametrically opposite to that envisaged in the formal theory of policy-making referred to above. He functions primarily as a propagandist of values, not as a technician supplying data for the pre-existing preferences of the policy-makers. Some of his propaganda is directed at those participants in political decision-making to whom the advisers are directly responsive, aimed at shaping their values in the direction of the adviser's own. Much of it is directed through his political superiors to other participants in the political process—including the general public—and the adviser becomes, in fact, a supplier of arguments and briefs which seek to gain wider support for economists' political values.

"Settled" vs. "live" issues

In some cases, of course, economists have not succeeded even in the first step—converting any significant decision-makers to their values. Then they can act, not as advisers in shaping policy in some detail, but only as critics urging that its basis be changed. The outstanding American example of this situation is, of course, the agricultural price support program with its related apparatus of complex restrictions on output. Most competent professional economists view this program as badly designed even in terms of its own goals, and, what is worse, in large part directed at inappropriate goals. But more than two decades of criticism, conducted in public forums outside the government and, less persistently, in private arenas within it have failed to change the views of the relevant policy-makers on which goals are important, or which instruments appropriate.

To be sure, in all these areas of policy-making, economists also engage in more purely technical activities, in addition to their prime task of value-advocacy. For example, in the anti-trust and regulatory areas where policy is made by a process of case-by-case adjudication before administrative and judicial tribunals, both the selection of cases to investigate and prosecute and the development of arguments for deciding them in one way rather than another can benefit substantially from the technical advice of economists. Traditionally, these activities have been the province of lawyers, and it is only recently that economic advisers have begun to play any noticeable role in these processes. Even within the present broad framework of these policies, greater reliance on high quality economic advice in applying them could achieve substantial gains in their effectiveness. The use of modern econometric methods of cost and demand analysis has hardly begun in these areas; their

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wider application would be one important source of such benefits.

The relative weight of technical and value components in economic advice on policy problems is strongly influenced by the place of the issue on the political scale of "settled" vs. "live." Anti-trust policy is at the relatively settled end of the scale. The broad scope of the law, which determines the limits of the policy, has remained surprisingly stable over time. Since the passage of the Sherman Act more than three-quarters of a century ago, only three major changes in law have been made—in 1914, 1937, and 1950. The size of the enforcement effort has grown only slowly in absolute terms in the last three decades; in relation to the size of the economy, it has shrunk. The nature of the enforcement process, with its dominant emphases on response to complaints by businessmen who consider themselves injured by the activities of a supplier, customer, or rival, has likewise changed little. This situation, in turn, reflects the underlying balance of political forces that sustains and limits the policy: on the one side, the strong continuing pervasive attachment to competition as a symbol of American virtues, the persistence of populist sentiments among farmers and to some extent trade unionists, which is reflected by their representatives in Congress and reinforced by a general widespread suspicion of "big business" and "monopoly," and the political power of small businessmen and their organized group representatives; on the other side, the productive achievements of the economy which are widely perceived as the achievements of the handful of large firms whose names and products are household words, the pragmatic unwillingness of nearly all American politicians to engage in "crusades" to improve what functions well, and the political power of big business, especially through the mass media.

This balance incorporates to some degree the economists' commitment to competition as a value, but—of course—in a crude way which diverges widely from his professional understanding of its significance. Otherwise, it draws on only a small part of what economists have to say about the structure and functioning of markets. But, except to the degree that the economists' views on the virtues of competition serve to reinforce the existing balance and the "settled" character of the policy, there is little political market for professional urgings of a significantly different policy, especially the more vigorously pro-competitive one that students of these problems usually espouse.

In such a context the policy role of the economist tends to be small, though its technical elements may be relatively important within that narrow scope. As a crusading critic, he is unlikely to have much impact on policy. As an insider, he is generally confined to technical tasks within the given policy framework. The value of these, of course, can be far from negligible. Within the confines of

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a broadly settled policy there is still room for change. In this particular area, policy change comes about, in large part, by the way in which the enforcing agencies select cases and frame issues for courts and commissions to decide. These are processes to which economists have contributed, and, as I have already argued, they can contribute more. Yet this kind of influence clearly has sharp limits within the present policy machinery.

The case of gold

By contrast with the relatively settled issues of policy on competition, we can examine the recent and current situation of international monetary policy. On the political scale, the issue has been one of the liveliest problems of economic policy for nearly a decade, both in the United States and internationally. To the professional economist, the issues turn around the adequacy or inadequacy of the present gold-exchange standard as an international monetary mechanism, the workability of the United States role in that system (in particular the fixed dollar price of gold and the role of gold as a reserve asset), and the urgency of making fundamental changes in the system. The overwhelming weight of professional opinion—though not all of it—views the present role of gold in the system as irrational. However, there is a wider spectrum of judgments on such questions as how urgent a change in the system is, what the desirable rate of growth of international liquidity should be, and what particular institutional mechanisms would be preferable to the admittedly highly imperfect present one. There are particularly sharp differences of opinion on what the effects on international trade and investment would be of supplanting the present regime of quasi-fixed exchange rates for the major trading nations with one in which at least some major rates "floated."

But it is not these matters on which the question of economic advice useful to political decision-makers currently turns. Rather, it is primarily on the simple fundamental question of the dispensability or indispensability of gold as a basis of the international monetary system. Next in importance is the only somewhat more complex question of the significance of gold to the United States position in the international economy, and the nature and consequences of any change in that position. On both these points, political decision-makers have shown a very strong attachment to the indispensability of gold and a belief in the near-disastrous consequences for the United States of any change in its role. The very terms in which public statements of government spokesmen—and of their political critics as well—are framed, "defense of the dollar," "stopping the hemorrhage of gold," and the like are revealing. For nearly a decade, the major policy measures of the United States have been

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aimed at "correcting" its balance-of-payments deficit in order to "maintain the stability of the dollar," and the measures taken have become increasingly stringent in the last part of the period. The major task of professional economic advisers, consequently, has been to try to shift these preferences, and to argue that the consequences of a change in the role of gold—including, possibly, its total disappearance—for the United States and the international economy are not, in the appropriate scale, at all serious and much to be preferred to possible outcomes of a continuance of the kinds of "defense" measures the United States has been taking in the recent past. In this, the economic advisers have had very modest success indeed.

This failure, in turn, reflects less the stubborn attachment of policy-makers to their own ideas of the importance of gold and more the political strength of the forces supporting the present arrangement. These include both a domestic and an international component. Within the country, the financial community, especially the part of it heavily involved in international markets, and the large business firms with world-wide activities have been the main supporters of the sanctity of the existing system. Their views have been voiced within the government chiefly through the Federal Reserve System, especially by the Chairman of the Board of Governors and the President of the New York Bank. The Secretary of the Treasury, too, must to some degree be responsive to these groups. Their commitment to the present international system involves at least three distinct elements. First is the desire to limit the policy-making powers of the federal government in the economic sphere. The continuing balance-of-payments deficit has been an important and often decisive argument for "restraint" in the pursuit of monetary and fiscal policies directed at full employment. Under present institutional arrangements, this restraint is enforced by the market, and the spokesmen for the financial community play the roles of forecasters and interpreters of what the market will tolerate. Second is the belief that earnings of banks that are active in the international market are closely dependent on the present system. This group argues that the widespread and increasing use of the dollar as a currency of settlement in international transactions, and the large volume of banking business connected therewith, is the product of the dollar's status as a reserve currency, which in turn rests on its special tie to gold. The final element is a strong ideological attachment to the gold basis of the international currency system, and a belief that it is in some sense "natural" and that alternative arrangements, by contrast, would be "artificial."

Internationally, the first and last of these arguments are both important. The power issue, in international terms, has a double aspect. First, the banking community in Europe is even more suspicious—

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if possible—of the policy-making power of governments than that of the United States. Further, the central banks of the continental countries are more independent and stronger, vis-à-vis their corresponding governments, than is the Federal Reserve System; and they are also even more closely identified with the private financial community. In addition, however, there is a second element: conflict over the international distribution of power over monetary policy between the United States and other nations. Here it is the institutional interests of the present custodians of United States policy in the international monetary sphere—the Treasury, the Board of Governors, and the New York Bank—which are at stake. To a significant extent, arguments within the government in the recent past about the desirability of various changes in the international monetary system have turned essentially on the question of who shall have decision-making power, rather than on how most effectively to improve the functioning of the system as a whole. These issues run not only to the power of the United States vis-à-vis that of other countries and the International Monetary Fund as an institution, but just as much or even more to the power of the present custodians of United States policy as against possible new claimants to that custody.

An ideological and emotional attachment to gold as the "natural" basis of money probably has even stronger roots in Europe than in the United States. Experiences with large-scale inflation have been more widespread, frequent, and painful there than here, and these lead to stronger and more pervasive fears of its repetition. Thus the conservative posture of Continental private and central bankers reflects widespread popular values.

In this context of emotional beliefs and institutional interests, the economic adviser must rely on the power of reason. Where the issues are analytical and empirical, perhaps this power is sufficient, anyhow in the long run. Thus, for example, the extent of the dependence of the earnings of the international banks on the role of the dollar as a reserve currency is capable of analysis and, to some degree of approximation, of quantitative estimate, and a demonstrably wrong view cannot persist indefinitely. However, where the issues are more nearly pure matters of conflicting values, the economic adviser can at best point at the availability and consistency of alternative value judgments. Where the existing constellation of value preferences has a strong institutional embodiment, such exhortation alone is a feeble instrument. If, however, the alternative value scheme can be identified with a constituency of potential political significance, the possibility for advisers to influence the preferences of their political clients is much greater. Here, there is a clear parallel between the present difficulties with international monetary policy and with attitudes toward gold and recent diffi-

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culties—not entirely surmounted—with domestic full-employment policy and with attitudes toward budget deficits. The willingness of the leaders of the Administration to shift their own attitudes, and give less weight to Congressional and public fears, lays at least as much in the increasing recognition of the political gains to be derived from a significant decrease in the level of unemployment as in the growth of conviction that the size of the deficit in the administrative budget, per se, was of no economic significance. To date, an equally powerful connection has not been made with respect to gold and the balance of payments.

The case of incomes policy

The pair of issues we have contrasted above in terms of their position in the "live" vs. "settled" spectrum in politics—the international payments problem being a live, the anti-trust problem, a relatively settled one—might be ranked differently in terms of economic knowledge. The basic elements of one or more effective and stable international payments systems are well understood by economists; in none of them need gold play a part. Choice among them does turn on the kind of political issues sketched above. On the other hand, some important economic issues in the design and application of a pro-competitive policy are still subject to a significant degree of controversy, which can be settled only by more empirical work. This is especially true of the problems of social economies of scale in marketing, research, and finance, and of the relation between market structure and economic performance in the dimension of innovation. But increased knowledge itself is unlikely to result in any significant change in this area of policy, unless it is accompanied by some change in the political equilibrium which now determines it.

The kind of issue which is live in both political and professional terms often presents wider opportunities for the economic adviser. In such a situation he may be able to shape the way both the political and the intellectual issues are framed, and thus try to make knowledge and policy somewhat more responsive to each other. Thus, for example, the problems of incomes policy, or wages and prices, are currently live in both dimensions. In intellectual terms, the problem is to explore the nature of the interrelations between the level of unemployment and the degree of price stability in the short run. Both theoretical and econometric work directed toward measuring and explaining these connections has been growing rapidly. In political terms, the problem is how low a level of unemployment can "safely" be set as the target level for stabilization policy. Can the target rate be reduced below 3.5 per cent or 4 per cent of the labor force without facing either an unacceptably high

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rate of price increase or something even worse? This of course depends on preference amongst possible alternatives. Is a 2.5 per cent per annum rate increase in the Consumers Price Index acceptable, while 3 per cent is not? Is three per cent preferable to wage-price guidelines, and are the latter preferable to 3.5 per cent, which in turn is preferable to formal price and wage controls, which are themselves preferable to cutting the tie between the dollar and gold and allowing the dollar to float?

In relation to a problem of this degree of complexity and novelty, the efforts of an economic adviser will generally involve two conceptually different aspects, one technical and one political. Technically, he will try to formulate the trade-offs amongst all the potential alternative policies, and, perhaps more significant, bring new alternatives into the discussion. Politically, he will, as we have pointed out before, be examining the preference rankings of alternatives, and urging his views on what they should be. While conceptually distinct, these two aspects of the adviser's efforts are inextricably intertwined in practice.

In the first aspect of his role, an adviser on incomes policy might point out the dependence of evaluation of "acceptable" rates of increase in the price level on the balance-of-payments position of the United States, the status of the dollar as a reserve currency, and the relation between the dollar and gold. These relations would, in general, not be obvious to the political decision-makers, and they might then have new alternatives to evaluate. The same process might lead the advisers at least to point out that a floating dollar instead of one tied to gold could make a 3.5 to 4 per cent rise in the price level tolerable, and to ask: might not such a rate of inflation be acceptable if it would also lead to a reduction to 2 per cent of the target level of unemployment, which in turn could lead to a halving of the unemployment rate of unskilled Negro males?

Or to take another alternative, the arguments can be made that the essential mechanism of the wage-price interaction is the attempt by the strongly unionized workers in the capital-intensive large-scale industrial enterprises to convert the transient extra profits of the upswing into permanent wage gains via the mechanism of collective bargaining. On this basis, some change in the corporate income tax to capture these transient gains through taxation might prove a key element in preventing their permanent incorporation into the cost structure, and might make a system of informal wage-price guidelines workable over a wider range of demand pressures than it would otherwise be. Such a scheme would inevitably contain features similar to those of an excess profits tax; a kind of taxation viewed with strong distaste by policy-makers, businessmen, and economists alike. Yet, as an alternative to some form of more direct price and wage controls, such a tax device

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might appear attractive to at least some of these groups. In that context, the economic adviser might wish both to persuade the policy-maker that this was a superior alternative, and to help persuade both the policy-maker and through him the public that the goals of lower unemployment and "reasonable" price stability were worth the price of an additional—and, to some powerful groups, especially obnoxious—tax.

The economic adviser may be forced to seek even more direct confrontation with the ultimate value issues on which policy judgments in these areas turn. The general level of unemployment and the problems of the Negro ghetto are intimately related. It is clear that for the Negro the period of recent history in which his economic status advanced most rapidly was the period of war-induced labor shortage and repressed inflation, from 1942 through 1946. Then the kind of recruiting, training, upgrading programs which the Labor Department and the Job Corps are now doing on a pitifully small scale, and the Congress is paying for most grudgingly, were being carried out on a large scale—and many times more effectively—by business firms, impelled by the necessities of labor shortages. An economic policy which maintained, over as long a period as proved possible, an average effective rate of unemployment that was zero or negative, in the sense of the relations between job vacancies and unemployed workers, and relied on direct price and wage controls to repress inflation, would do more to reproduce the economic and social benefits for the Negro of that earlier period than any special-purpose programs directed only to the Negro community that seem at all within the bounds of feasibility, viewed no matter how optimistically.

Direct wage and price controls are widely unpopular. Businessmen, trade union leaders, and economists are united in denouncing their evils. To the former two groups, they are government interferences with "liberty" which are unwarrantable, except perhaps under the circumstances of total war; to the economists, they are so obviously replete with allocative inefficiencies as to be undesirable except in circumstances where no other policy instruments are believed to be available. They are admittedly cumbersome administratively, and difficult to enforce, especially if price controls should extend to the retail level. Yet the social gravity of the problems of Negro unemployment and poverty is clearly such as to justify examination of such a program, with re-evaluation of the goals of economic policy it implies. Economists in general, and those with access to political leaders in particular, are best placed to initiate such a re-evaluation, and to provide a reasoned framework of analysis and argument, which helps make changes in policy comprehensible and acceptable. Whether political leaders would be ready to accept the necessity for such a re-evaluation is another

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question, but in my judgment the political context in which it would be made either exists already or is coming into being rapidly.

Urban planning and education

There is a wide range of less apocalyptic problems, which are currently live in both intellectual and political terms, and in the resolution of which the value judgments as well as the technical advice of economists will play an important part. Examples which exhibit two different kinds of economic value judgments—both, it is true, embedded in technical questions of great complexity—are provided by problems of urban planning and the finance of higher education.

The interrelated set of questions involving urban renewal, urban planning, and transportation planning raise questions that go right to the heart of the usual value assumptions of the economist. The whole field is dominated by the existence of "externalities"—of unintended but important consequences to the community as a whole. It is clear that there is no simple meaningful sense in which this range of decisions can be left to market forces. It is further clear that our past methods for dealing with the major externalities are increasingly inadequate, if they ever were adequate. Zoning by a fragmented set of competing jurisdictions, highway planning uncoordinated with zoning and land-use planning, on the one hand, and without comprehensive urban-suburban transport planning on the other, simply fail to meet the issues. What kind of alternate decision mechanisms are available? The natural bias of economists is toward believing that consumers "ought" to get what they want, in some ethical sense of the word. Economists accordingly tend to resist, as a matter of fundamental principle, changes in decision-making processes that substitute planners' choices for consumers' choices. Yet, in the face of what consumers' choices are leading to, some such substitution appears inevitable. At the very least, planners will determine, much more narrowly than present processes do, the range of alternatives from which consumers may choose. The key question then becomes by what political mechanism planners' choices are reviewed and controlled. Economists possess both habits of thought and analytical tools which can be put to good use in designing these processes. They will be able to do so, however, only if they share and, indeed, urge the value premise that such processes are desirable. Otherwise, they will emerge as largely futile critics of policies shaped by others, and their objections will be viewed as captious or doctrinaire.

In higher education, rapidly rising unit costs and enrollments have given new urgency to the interdependent questions of how much higher education should be provided, how it should be fi-

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nanced, and to whom it should be available. These problems have been one of the stimuli to a greatly increased interest in the study of education by economists. Here again their value premises, often inarticulate, lead economists to address the policy questions in particular ways. In general, education is viewed as an investment, estimates are made of both private and social rates of return thereon, and problems of admission and tuition policies are seen basically as pricing problems, complicated by the difficulty that the output in question has elements of a collective as well as a private good. In this context, the choice between extending the present state university system, with its very low tuition rates and commitment to provide places for all high-school graduates who want them, and moving toward an essentially full-cost tuition, market-allocation system, combined with a subsidized loan fund, possibly with repayments geared to subsequent income, is seen primarily as a choice between an "irrational" and a "rational" pricing system. This is certainly a relevant aspect of the difference between the two systems, but it may be far from the centrally significant one in view of the fundamental social issues, pertaining to the distribution of status and income that are involved.

The common theme of all these examples is, of course, the centrality of changes in values to policy decisions, and, consequently, the presence of an indispensable ingredient of value advocacy, along with technical economic analysis, in the advice that the economist offers the policy-maker. This point can be seen in a more systematic context by looking briefly at certain key features of the process of public policy formation in a democratic society. This examination will make clear why the picture of a policy-maker with known (at least to him) preferences advised by professionals who present the set of all possible alternative policies and their predicted outcomes, from among which he chooses, is of little use as a conceptualization of the relation between economic adviser and policy-maker.

Policy-making in a democracy

Policy-making in a democracy is typically a response to pressure on the government to "do something" about a social problem. Changing circumstances to which the social machinery—including the machinery of government—is imperfectly adapted, create the problem. If the problem is sufficiently large in terms of some measures of political importance—numbers of people or powerful people or symbolically important people or dollars—and sufficiently persistent, it registers as a "crisis." Such crises typically are not well foreseen, and, even to the extent that they are foreseen, they are usually not attended to in anticipation. Democratic governments are

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primarily organized to respond to external pressures, rather than to seek out potential problems and initiate action in relation to them. Whether they can or should behave otherwise is an important question, but one which would take us too far afield to pursue here.

The largely responsive rather than anticipatory character of government policy-making leads to three further interrelated characteristics which are important to our inquiry. First is what has been called incrementalism: policy moves a step at a time, and usually a small step at a time. Second, decision-makers fashion policy changes with a sharp eye to the breadth of support and the narrowness of opposition to their proposals. As a consequence of these characteristics, finally, only a low value is placed on consistency in any large-scale sense as a criterion of policy. Responsiveness to the problem at hand and feasibility in political and operational terms far outweigh any measure of "fit" into "grand designs" in terms of ends or instruments.

Ongoing governmental policies are crystallized in the bureaucratic machinery which is responsible for their application. This machinery, in turn, is coupled with—and is in some measure responsive to—the interests involved in the policy. Thus the balance of values reflected by existing policies has an institutionalized expression in the assumptions, conceptions, and working rules of those who apply them. The existing policy machinery inevitably acts as an obstacle to changes in policy, since these would require changes in the structure of habits, rules, and ideas it embodies. To be sure, this machinery usually is capable of some degree of adaptive response to changes in its environment; but as we have pointed out, the need for new policies arises from unanticipated changes going beyond the adaptive range of existing policy means.

Thus, changes in policy require not only that policy-makers strike a new value balance, but that they reshape the existing bureaucracy to give effect to that new balance. This is a difficult task, and one which reflects back on the underlying one of finding an acceptable new policy; since the people who apply and, so to speak, embody the existing policy are usually strong and skillful advocates of its continuance. A political decision-maker in this situation finds good use for the ability of a technical adviser to assist in the tasks of advocacy that are indispensable to effecting changes; and as we have already argued at sufficient length, these are usually tasks of persuasion about value preferences as much as they are more technical tasks of forecasting the outcomes of alternative policies.

In our governmental structure, the problems of advocacy arise at several levels, within the executive branch, to the legislature, and to the public, including both special publics relevant to particular issues and the general public. Policy-advisers are not necessarily involved at all three levels to the same degree or in the same way.

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In general, their efforts are most important within the executive, but their ability as effective advocates for wider audiences often has an important bearing on the appeal of their advice to the decision-maker who must bear the final burden of persuasion at all levels.

Looked at in these terms, it is not hard to see that the technical adviser of the formal model, whose whole output consisted in forecasts of an "if this, then that" type—in which the "thises" covered a large range of alternative policies, and the "that's" were, as nearly as possible, politically (value) neutral descriptions of the distribution of possible outcomes—would be of little use to the political decision-maker.

The relative effectiveness of economists

All this is not to say that there is nothing but value advocacy in the role of the economist as policy-adviser. On the contrary, the fact that he does command some genuine positive science, that he can analyze events and predict outcomes of alternative actions with more success than the "statesman" or "man of affairs," is indispensable to his claim to give any advice that is worth listening to, or, over time, that is in fact listened to. In this respect we may look at the economic adviser as essentially playing the role of a filter, selecting, in respect to any particular policy problem, out of the whole range of possible alternative policies that the "positive" knowledge of the profession could offer at a given moment, those few which are relevant to the perspective in which his political client operates, and, in dialogue with him, finally that one which embodies what both see as a workable new value balance.

A large part of the effectiveness of economists as policy advisers comes precisely from the circumstance that the analytical framework of economics provides, among other things, a language for, and training in, articulating value preferences over a wide range of important social issues. It is precisely this component of the economist's skills which fits him peculiarly well to the task of helping the policy-maker articulate his own value preferences. This aspect of the comparative advantage of the economist as policy-adviser can be brought out by contrasting him with the specialist in operations research trained in purely technical terms. In, say, a problem of military tactics or logistics, where ends are well defined, the economist has no advantage over an equally well-trained operations research specialist. But in a broader problem, whether of economic policy, or of large-scale strategy, where questions of what ends can and should be are a central part of the problem, the economist usually shows to advantage.

It seems unlikely that in our society, with its complex division of labor and rapidly changing technologies, the goals of economic

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policy will become sufficiently well defined and widely accepted so that the role of the economist in policy-making will sink (or rise) to the level of the purely technical adviser, at least in the foreseeable future. Rather, to the extent that this does happen in particular policy areas, other areas now outside the domain of systematic public action can be expected to become the focus of policy concern and debate. Some of these emerging new areas of policy, such as urban redevelopment, education, and health, are likely to involve important problems falling outside the more traditional interests of the economists. All of them involve problems for which individual choice within the framework of market institutions is likely to be an inappropriate mode of social decision-making.

The profession may well then face the question of the extent to which it can and will adapt its analyses to encompass a wider range of social goals and policy instruments than those conventionally the concern of economists, or leave primacy in these areas of policy-making to other kinds of advisers. But perhaps these are problems of utopia, and we shall have enough time devoted to struggling with the still current and unresolved issues of stability, growth, and equity to put off thinking about them.

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Economics, sociology, and the best of all possible worlds

MANCUR OLSON, JR.

WHAT are the boundaries that separate the social science disciplines from each other? Where (if anywhere) do we draw the line between those problems that call for the expertise of the economist and those that demand the skills of the sociologist, or the psychologist, or the political scientist? This is *not* the kind of methodological question that interests only those scholars who don't want to get on with the job: it is at the center of some debates in Washington about past and prospective decisions on public policy, and has an inescapable intellectual importance as well.

Some of the debates about the roles different social sciences should have in the policy-making process were provoked by two relatively recent innovations in public policy. One of these was the President's directive that the Planning-Programming-Budgeting System, which is an outgrowth of economic analysis, should be used in all departments of the federal government. This prompted disagreement about whether an economic approach is the most appropriate for dealing with the "social" programs of government, or suited to an inevitably political environment. The other innovation was the decision to prepare a trial-run "social report," akin to the Economic Report of the President. This latter innovation is more relevant here, as it raises the question about the relative roles of the different social sciences in a most obvious and ineluctable way.

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The "economic" and the "social"

The responsibility for the development of the trial-run social report has been given to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. This department obtained the help of a Panel on Social Indicators, composed of leading social scientists from universities and research organizations, who work on this Report on a part-time basis. Daniel Bell, co-Editor of *The Public Interest*, and Alice Rivlin, Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, are the co-Chairmen of this panel. I have the immediate responsibility for the effort, and this fact partly explains the perspective I bring to this subject. On the legislative side, Senator Walter Mondale and ten other senators have introduced a "Full Opportunity and Social Accounting Act"; this bill would provide for a Council on Social Advisers, which would advise the President on social policy and issue an annual social report on the state of the nation. The hearings on this bill have elicited testimony from a wide variety of scholars and public officials.

Inevitably these hearings, and the discussions in the Panel on Social Indicators, have raised the question of the division of labor among the social science disciplines, in general, and between economics and sociology, in particular. Several of those who testified on the Mondale bill wondered whether it might not be better to create a combined Council of Economic and Social Advisers rather than two separate councils. And there has been no agreement about how the "economic" and "social" spheres could be distinguished, so that there could be a clear allocation of responsibilities between the Council of Economic Advisers and any new Council of Social Advisers. Proponents of the Mondale bill are especially anxious that the President get more advice about the problems of the poor and the disadvantaged. The problems of these groups certainly are "social" problems, and the counsel of the best sociologists, psychologists, and political scientists should of course be available to the policymakers who deal with them. But, if poverty is not an "economic" problem, then nothing is. Moreover, social programs require scarce resources and that is what economics is all about. No consensus is emerging on what the respective roles of the different social sciences should be.

The debate in Washington about the mix and organization of the social science input in government obviously reflects the hazy and diverse definitions of the spheres of the various social sciences in the universities. Many leading scholars trespass on what are supposed to be the territories of disciplines other than their own. As an economist with experience of some of the more exotic uses of economic theory, I am naturally best able to cite economists who have

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made contributions to other social sciences. There is no doubt in my mind that Kenneth Arrow, Duncan Black, Kenneth Boulding, James Buchanan, Anthony Downs, John Harsanyi, Albert Hirschman, Charles Lindblom, Jerome Rothenberg, Thomas Schelling, and Gordon Tullock have made significant contributions to political science or sociology, and others equally important could be named. It would be possible to compile similarly long lists of scholars in each social science who have made major contributions to other social sciences.

If the problem of distinguishing the spheres of responsibility of the various social sciences has not been solved, and if this problem complicates even current discussions of governmental organization and public policy, then there is the need to give it some careful thought. As we shall see, this problem can be understood by looking at some of the most profound problems and fundamental theories in social science.

The comprehensiveness of theory

The social sciences have not been adequately distinguished from one another largely because it has not usually been understood that the fundamental differences between the social sciences involve not the subjects they study, but rather the preconceptions they have inherited, the methods they use, and the conclusions they reach. To distinguish the defining features of the social science disciplines, we must look at the ways in which scholars in various disciplines work, rather than at the nature of the phenomena they study. For the theories or tools of thought of the social science disciplines are so general that each discipline's theory encompasses objects or problems that convention puts in the reservation of some other discipline. This comprehensiveness, which is manifest most clearly in economics and sociology, is not generally understood.

Thus, the general applicability of economic theory has not usually been understood by laymen, and indeed many of the older generation of economists also interpret economics too narrowly. This is probably due in large part to the special historical circumstances in which economic theory first came to have coherence. The great economists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were often inspired to intellectual innovation by immediate practical problems. They were for the most part caught up in the political controversies of their time and were sometimes passionate ideologues. Most of them, at least in Great Britain, were advocates for the rising middle classes and the mercantile and industrial interests. They were usually utilitarians, democrats, internationalists, and passionate advocates of laissez-faire. Indeed, in nineteenth-century Britain, the word economist was often taken to *mean* an advocate of laissez-faire in general and free trade in particular. The belief that economic theory is ap-

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plicable only to goods that fetch a price in the markets of "capitalist" economies of the kind the classical economists admired has survived to the present day.

In fact, economic theory not only is, but (if it is to avoid arbitrariness and error) *must be* so general that it also applies to "goods" that are *not* traded in markets—and also to traditional and communistic societies. If an economist is studying the housing market, he cannot ignore the fact that some locations have more prestige than others, are in areas occupied by different races or social groups, are in different political jurisdictions, and have different aesthetic attributes. Obviously any of these factors can affect the satisfaction an owner would get from a house, and the market price of that house, as much as its material characteristics.

Indeed, it is in general *not* possible to give an entirely accurate explanation of economic behavior in a situation unless *all* of the perceived advantages of a given alternative, to the actor being studied or advised, are counted as "returns," and all of the disadvantages of that alternative, as perceived by the relevant actor, as "costs." The economist will frequently—but by no means always—predict that the actor being studied will tend to choose the alternative that promises the largest excess of returns over costs, which is by definition most advantageous in terms of the actor's values.

Of course, the actor may lack the intelligence, information, or detachment needed to choose the alternative that is best in terms of his own preferences. He might be a "satisficer" rather than a maximizer, or operate according to an erroneous traditional rule, or let biases distort his perception of the facts. In such a case the economist can take comfort from the fact that the actor being studied may be in the market for a consultant! In any event, economic theory will have relevance, in a normative, if not always positive, way.

The general relevance of economics

Economic theory is, indeed, relevant whenever actors have determinate wants or objectives and at the same time do not have such an abundance of the means needed to achieve these ends that all of their desires are satiated. The ends in question may be social status or political power, and the means will be anything that is in fact conducive to the attainment of the ends, whether or not these means can bring a price in the market. *Economic (more precisely microeconomic) theory is in a fundamental sense more nearly a theory of rational behavior than a theory of material goods.*

To be sure, economic theory in its most general form can be as vacuous or trivial as it is broad. Many situations are so difficult, or so simple, that no formal method of thinking will be of any practical help. Economics, moreover, has not got very far with the problems

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of uncertainty, of strategic interaction (in the game theory sense), of acquiring or getting along without information, not to mention other problems we need to understand better before we can have anything like a complete or adequate theory of rational behavior. And where economic theory is not in itself deficient, economists often are: they sometimes lack the fullness of mind, the judgment, and, above all, the imagination needed to apply economic theory to problems outside their traditional purview. In any event, the purpose here is not to glorify or belittle economics, but rather to argue that some of the basic theories of social science, including economic theory, are limited not so much in terms of the objects they can be used to study as in other ways.

The generality of economic theory with respect to the objects of study is illustrated not only by the politically or sociologically relevant work of men such as those named earlier, but also by other recent developments. The output of the United States Department of Defense is not sold for money, yet the economic approach inherent in the Planning-Programming-Budgeting System has proved most helpful there. This system has even shown great promise in departments, such as my own, which deal in such obscure intangibles as health, education, and welfare, and which are relatively far removed from the market place. In the specialty of international relations, too, one finds that insights of economic theory have sometimes been decidedly relevant, as the work of Kenneth Boulding and Thomas Schelling shows, yet these men have dealt with the political-military, rather than the material, wants of nations, and often ignored the market sector in their models. The nations of Eastern Europe have an institutional environment vastly different from that which the classical economists knew or wanted, yet many economists there are beginning to use the same economic theory we know in the West, and sometimes find it helpful in suggesting ways in which their *existing* Marxist-inspired institutions might be made to work more efficiently. (Indeed, economic theory has escaped the original ideological limitations on its generality to such an extent that I have read some interesting work by economists who, as I later learned, were avowed Communists, but whose work was such that, if asked, I would have guessed they were typical Western intellectuals, if not laissez-faire enthusiasts.) Finally, the developing areas of the world, different and diverse as their cultures and conditions may be, have nonetheless proved to be about as amenable to ordinary economic analysis as the Western democracies.

"Better off" and "worse off"

The fact that economic theory has no unique application to material goods, but deals with any objectives that people value in con-

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ditions of scarcity, cannot be adequately documented in any brief discussion. But it may nonetheless be useful to mention one basic idea that has an important—if in many respects overly simple—application to politics. This is the notion of "Pareto-optimality," which is defined as a situation such that no individual in the group at issue can be made better off without someone else being made worse off. This idea is normally used to describe resource allocations that are efficient and ideal, in the sense that they satisfy individual wants to the maximum possible degree, given the available resources, the state of technology, and the distribution of income. If someone could get more without anyone having less, that would mean a way had been found to get more output from the available resources.[1]

The generalization to politics comes from the fact that when we say a Pareto-optimal situation is one in which no one can be made better off without someone else being made worse off, we need not define "better off" or "worse off" in terms of material goods alone. *Indeed, if we consider only these so-called "economic" wants of the individuals concerned, the whole analysis could be invalid*—for the only relevant measure of value in this context is that of the individuals concerned, and if one of them values a given degree of social status or political power more highly at the margin than some material good, he will be "worse off" if he has to give up that degree of social status or political power in exchange for the material good. An attempt to "sub-optimize" by considering only material objectives could be meaningless, for a step that seemed efficient because it increased the output of material goods might in fact be inefficient because the social or political goods that had to be sacrificed were worth more than the material goods gained. There is thus no way of defining a situation as Pareto-optimal without taking all of the things people value into account.

When "better off" and "worse off" are understood as they must be, it becomes clear that Pareto-optimality is a condition of political equilibrium in democratic societies. (I use the word "equilibrium," which is the object of much controversy in political science and sociology, with the same meaning it has in economics.) If there is some step or combination of steps that will make one or more individuals better off, without making anyone worse off, there is always the possibility some political or administrative entrepreneur will respond to the incentive inherent in the situation and organize a change in policy. This is, to be sure, only one of a vast variety of necessary conditions of political equilibrium, and perhaps a rather weak one. But can we conceive of a complete theory of political change, or of

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[1] Pareto-optimality means a little more than that aggregate income is a maximum, for the income or value of the goods and services produced depends on relative prices, which in turn depend on the income distribution in the group.

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the politics of consensus, that would leave Pareto-optimality out of account?

Some of the other political insights that can be got from the notion of Pareto-optimality have, however, been explored. The Swedish economist Knut Wicksell pointed out more than a half century ago that optimal measures should be able to command something approaching unanimous support, since by definition there will be some possible distribution of the benefits and costs such that everyone would have an incentive to favor such measures. (This would not be the case under a *complete* unanimity rule, where an individual might withhold his then indispensable vote in an attempt to extort a larger share of the total gains from the measure.) More recently, Professors James Buchanan and Gordon Tullock have, in their important book on *The Calculus of Consent,* argued that reasoning of this sort shows that the majority rule principle is in certain respects arbitrary and unsatisfactory, and that the bicameralism, two-thirds rules, and general checks and balances of the American system have the admittedly unsuspected virtue of preventing passage of many policies that are not toward Pareto-optimality.

A reoccupation with Pareto-optimality can, admittedly, sometimes support a classical-liberal opposition to the coercive redistribution of income. Redistribution cannot be expected to attain anything like unanimous support, yet it may be overwhelmingly important. But there is nothing inherently conservative in the political use of the concept of Pareto-optimality. I have, for example, argued elsewhere that there may sometimes be a tendency toward what has been called public squalor in the midst of private affluence because of the fact that many Pareto-optimal measures for *local* areas may not be able to get majority support in the *national* government. Though the gains from a Pareto-optimal measure are by definition greater than the costs, the number of gainers will be smaller than the number of losers when the benefits are local and the taxes are national. Fortunately, "logrolling" may make it possible for a number of local Pareto-optimal measures to pass as a package. (Logrolling thus does not necessarily deserve its evil popular reputation.) But logrolling requires complex and costly bargains and accordingly often will not occur.

The general relevance of sociology

What I have tried to argue is true of economic theory is quite as true of sociological thought. The perspective of the sociologist has important implications for *all* the other social sciences.

In attempting to illustrate this argument about sociological theory, I am handicapped in three ways: First, as an economist, I don't know the sociological literature as well as I would like to. The argument

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must therefore be based on what at best is a random sample of that literature. But for all the shortcomings of my knowledge of sociological thought, the major generalizations I will make about this literature will still almost certainly be correct; my sample could hardly be so untypical as to make me wrong about some of the great themes of this major intellectual tradition.

My second handicap stems from the fact that sociological thought is more pluralistic than economic thought: it is not a single, well-defined, almost monolithic entity like economic theory, but rather a collection of diverse and often independent theories. When I refer to "sociological theory," I will be speaking not of sociological thought as a whole, but of one particular sociological theory. That is the one associated with the tradition in which Professor Talcott Parsons has been the dominant contemporary figure. This is unfair to the *many* sociologists who use entirely different conceptions. It will also be unfair to Professor Parsons, whose views should properly be distinguished from those who share only some of this thought.

The third handicap results from the particular nature of Parsonian theory. This theory is not, like economic theory, a logically elaborate but unified hypothetico-deductive system susceptible to succinct (or even mathematical) description. Indeed, it is not "theory" in the sense in which that word is used in some other disciplines. It is rather an uncommonly rich and varied style of thought, replete with special insights, distinctions, and definitions, which makes *any* short summary insufficient and unfair. There is no alternative here, then, to a *Reader's Digest* level of oversimplification; this will naturally prove offensive to the connoisseur of Parsonian sociological literature.

Even the most casual glance at sociological theory of the Parsonian type reveals that it is very general and that it includes the traditional domains of economics and political science, and part of the field of psychology as well. Parsons explicitly makes economic theory, as well as almost every type of systematic study in social science, a special case of his General Theory of Action. This unusual emphasis on generality has been criticized, but I do not think the criticism is justified. Right or wrong, Parsonian theories are general, and have to be.

The necessity of this generality stems largely from the basic role this theory (like many other sociological theories) gives to the process of "socialization." The central preconception of this type of theory is that people do what they are brought up to do. It holds in effect that the hand that rocks the cradle does indeed rule the world. Even when particular individuals fail to want to be true to the values and norms that were inculcated in their childhood, they are still subject to the sentiments society passes on from generation to generation, since societies tend to set up mechanisms of social control, ranging from informal social pressure to the sanctions of the

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legal system, which enforce the patterns of behavior that they were brought up to believe were right.

The theory at issue holds that through socialization people acquire not only general attitudes relating to society as a whole or its major groupings, but also conceptions of particular "roles," such as husband, wife, businessman, priest, doctor, and soldier. The person who is born in a particular society is educated to expect that people who perform particular roles will act in certain ways—that mothers will care for their children, that doctors will care for the sick, and that businessmen will seek profits. In a well-developed and stable society, there is "institutional integration"—i.e., laws, organizations, and popular attitudes (as well as other mechanisms to ensure conformity) are extensive, elaborate, and in harmony with one another. Mutual role-expectations tend to be consistent. This reduces the amount of stress and alienation and strengthens the tendency to follow the pattern of behavior inculcated by the processes of socialization. There is a pronounced tendency in this tradition to regard extensive and consistent institutionalization as desirable for the health and stability of society, partly on the grounds that it minimizes alienation.

The Parsonian sociologist's emphasis on the socialization of common beliefs and conceptions of roles through families, religions, schools, and other institutions inevitably forces him to encompass many "economic," "political," and "psychological" aspects of reality. For the same processes and institutions that give an individual his social values also inculcate attitudes about economic and political life, and influence his whole personality. The same family that teaches a child social usage passes on a sense of what occupational achievements and political principles are expected. The churches, schools, media of information, and other agencies of socialization are similarly comprehensive. And often the values, ideologies, and religions passed on are themselves so general that they influence diverse aspects of life. It is thus not surprising that probably the most famous work in the sociological tradition at issue—or rather, one of the sources of that tradition—is Max Weber's *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism.* Though much subsequent research has tended to discredit Weber's substantive hypothesis, his heroic attempt to explain the singularity of the early modern European economy in terms of the Calvinistic religious ideas which many Europeans were taught remains a prototypical example of the style of sociology I have described, and of the fact that the sociological perspective is inevitably relevant to economic behavior.

The difference between economics and sociology

It is now possible to see the closest thing there is to a basis for a distinction between economics and sociology in terms of the object

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studied. If we define sociology as the discipline that studies the formation and transmission of wants or beliefs of all kinds, and economics as the discipline that studies the ways in which people strive to obtain whatever it is that they want, we would be much closer to the truth than those who think of sociology as something such as the study of life in groups and economics as the study of material gain in the marketplace. The proposed distinction would, for example, make it clear why both economists and sociologists should be interested in poverty. The economist is interested in poverty because the poor do not have the resources to meet even their important needs. If the economist *qua* economist is asked how the poor are different from us, he says "because they have less money." But if the sociologist *qua* sociologist is asked how the poor are different from us, he says "because they were brought up in the culture of poverty."

Still, it won't quite do to say that sociologists specialize in the study of the formation of wants and economists in the ways to satisfy them. There are a number of reasons for this. One is that they tend to use different methods, the economists relying on a nontrivially deductive theory, emphasizing quantification, and using simultaneous-equation techniques, the Parsonian sociologist using a less deductive method, relying occasionally on the case study, and often bringing a fuller knowledge of the history and context of a problem to bear. There are also differences of preconception, with some economists almost assuming that rationality is universal in the human animal, and with some sociologists almost treating rationality as a cultural peculiarity of those with the Protestant or capitalistic Ethic.

The economist and sociologist also often differ in the substantive conclusions they draw about the same problem. For example, when economists are asked to explain the choices about work and saving made by those who receive public assistance, they will often deplore the traditional 100 per cent tax on any wages or savings beyond a trivial minimum, and argue that recipients of welfare checks be allowed to work without sacrificing their claim to virtually all assistance. Some social workers of my acquaintance who have studied a great deal of Parsonian sociology, on the other hand, seem to assume that the habits and attitudes people form are more or less independent of the incentives they face, and that larger amounts of public assistance to those not working would best provide the basis for the development of middle class values. Another difference of conclusion typical of the two disciplines is that some Parsonian sociologists explain the choices a society makes in terms of what it needs (the "functions" that need to be performed) or in terms of what the people in it want. The economist, on the other hand, will not consider as an explanation anything like the

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statement that something exists because it has a function in a society, and will emphasize that the relation between wants and social outcomes is complex and even paradoxical (so that, for example, when everyone wants and tries to save more, they may all end up saving less).

What holds a society together?

The differences in method, preconception, and conclusion that distinguish modern economics and Parsonian sociology are perhaps best illustrated by considering the question of what it is that holds societies together or allows them to collapse. The stability of a society is perhaps as central as any concern in sociology. This problem is important in its own right, and draws added interest from the recent race riots and student demonstrations. It is obviously also relevant to any attempt at a social report, for one guide to the health of a society is its degree of unity and the probability that it will hold together.

This is not the place (and I am not the writer) to go into the manifold sociological controversies about the determinants of the stability of societies. But many sociologists, in the tradition considered here, build their explanations of the coherence of societies around the existence of common processes of socialization. They contend that it is mainly the similarity of values, norms, collective attitudes, and role expectations that holds a society together. If people are brought up to want and believe in the same things, they won't need to fight each other. There must in any event be a consensus about the most important things that will keep any divergencies and conflicts within tolerable bounds. Differences in culture, religion, family patterns, or educational systems so great that they inculcate basically different patterns of beliefs and wants are then held to be inimical to the stability of a society.

Economists do not often explicitly consider the question of what holds a whole society together, but they do consider some of the factors that favor the survival of an economic union. And this is enough to reveal that Parsonian sociologists and orthodox economists operate with preconceptions and methods that lead to drastically *opposed* conclusions about the determinants of a society's coherence and unity. The economist who is asked whether a group of nations should form a common market will usually argue that the more diverse the cultures and natural resources of these countries are, the greater the advantage of a common market, other things equal. The more diverse the resources, technologies, and tastes of the nations, the greater the gains from trade among them. Expecting nations that are practically identical to gain vast amounts from a common market is about as realistic as expecting to maximize

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motherhood by bringing women together. A rough index of the gains from trade would be the differences in the relative prices of different tradable goods in the different countries in the absence of trade. The larger these differences in relative prices, generally the greater the gains from selling what has been relatively cheap in one country in return for something that would be expensive if produced at home, but which is not expensive in the country with a comparative advantage in producing it. Many economists would assume that the greater the gains from trade, and therefore the incentive to trade, the greater will be the interest in preserving the common market or other institutions that allow the mutually advantageous trade to take place.

If the logic of this argument about economic unions is generalized and applied to states and societies, it provides a perspective different from that of most Parsonian sociology (though not altogether different from that of Durkheim's concept of "organic solidarity"). To see the general applicability of the economic approach, imagine a society in which everyone was socialized to think that all vacations should be in August and at the beach. That society would tend to suffer congestion and conflict at its beach resorts in August, and a lack of essential services at home for those who couldn't squeeze in (this is not an altogether unrealistic example: the French have been concerned about the need for policies to reduce the number of August vacations). If, on the other hand, some of the people in the society have been brought up to prefer a skiing vacation, or a summer cabin in the mountains, there will be less to fight about, and everyone can get what he wants for less. To take another example, suppose that a common culture and a common process of socialization mean that in a given culture everyone is brought up to strive to be a leader. Life in such a society will be a constant struggle for power and the society may therefore collapse. But if some of the people in the society should prefer to follow, there would be mutually advantageous relationships between leaders and followers which they would wish to preserve, along with the society that made these advantageous relationships possible. The use of the economist's method and preconceptions therefore seems to suggest that the more diverse the backgrounds and beliefs of a people, the greater the incentive they will have to continue their association.

It is in cases such as these, where different disciplinary methods and preconceptions lead to apparently opposite conclusions, that the lack of serious, detailed communication between economics and and the other social sciences is most tragic. A lack of mutual intellectual esteem is often enough evident in the references some economists and sociologists make to each other's discipline, but this is no substitute for extended confrontations based on continuing research. Disciplinary specialization, though obviously beneficial on

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balance, is partly responsible. As I see it, there is today some effective censorship of extended interdisciplinary confrontations, not because of any desire to still debate, but because disciplinary parochialism prevents the use of the methods of one social science on the substantive problems that are sometimes supposed to be in the province of another. The absence of constructive communication between economics and sociology is suggested by the ease with which new insights are gained when particular positions of the two disciplines are compared. This can be illustrated with the problem of social cohesion just considered.

Collective and noncollective goods

In order to do this, we will first have to draw a distinction between collective and noncollective (or, as they are more often, but less precisely called, public and private) goods. Leaving some definitional niceties aside, a collective good can be described as a good such that nonpurchasers cannot feasibly be excluded from its consumption. Defense is the classic example of such a good, since it is not practically possible to exclude anyone living in a country from the benefits (or dangers) of the nation's defense system. To a great degree the benefits provided by the police and the system of justice are also collective goods. A constitutional monarch is a particularly neat example of a collective good; the benefits of his reign reach all of his subjects, from those who are more royalist than the King to those who are Republicans.

Noncollective or private goods are, by contrast, goods such that nonpurchasers *can* be kept from consuming them. Thus, if an individual buys bread, or a car, others can be and usually are excluded from the consumption of what he has bought. There is, in other words, no joint or communal consumption of a noncollective good.

Now that the distinction between collective and noncollective goods has been drawn, the opposition between the economic and sociological views can be resolved, and the outlines of an argument that is apparently better than either developed. The conclusion of that argument is that a society will, other things being equal, be more likely to cohere if people are socialized to have diverse wants with respect to private goods and similar wants with respect to collective goods. A "good," in this language, is not of course necessarily a material good, but can be anything that people value. So what has been said means simply that, where individuals have objectives that they can consume or enjoy without others having to participate in this consumption, they will tend to cohere better if they have different tastes and productive capabilities, because this will maximize the gains from exchanges among them; on the other hand, where individuals have objectives such that if they are achieved

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for some they are automatically also achieved for others, the greater the similarity in their tastes and situations the easier it will be for them to agree on a common policy. Thus in a marriage it is helpful for one spouse to like fat and the other lean, but it is a danger if they want different numbers of children or different types of houses. Any gains from a comprehensive Middle Eastern common market would be increased by the fact that the Israelis and Arabs have different cultures and skills, but the possibility of a common regional government with a single established religion would (to put it mildly) not be increased by the fact that the peoples of the Middle East have experienced different processes of socialization.

To be sure, many Parsonian sociologists seem to have sensed (as Durkheim did long ago)[2] that some differences in wants and value systems could somehow enhance unity, and almost every economist must have realized (if he had ever considered this question) that in certain areas divergencies of wants could disrupt a society. A point as obvious and important as this could hardly be altogether novel. Still, most discussions of the question of social cohesion are thoroughly misleading, if not largely wrong, because they do not make the distinction between collective and noncollective goods and also make no effort to reconcile the perspectives of economics and sociology.

The "ideal" society in economics

The divergences in methodology, presupposition, and conclusion that differentiate modern economics and Parsonian sociology can also be illustrated by contrasting the "ideal" states of society that are envisaged by each discipline. The contrasting conceptions of the "ideal society" held by each of these intellectual traditions have considerable practical importance, for they help to determine what advice scholars of different disciplinary backgrounds offer to policy-makers. They are, moreover, absolutely fundamental to any possible

[2] Emile Durkheim distinguished "organic solidarity" resulting from the division of labor and "mechanical solidarity" due to similar sentiments. Durkheim drew this distinction in the last century, and did not, of course, know the distinction between collective and noncollective goods, so his analysis on this point is accordingly wrong in many respects. Nonetheless, it is far superior to most modern treatments of the subject. Significantly, Parsons has repeatedly belittled Durkheim's notion of organic solidarity, subordinated it to an elaborated conception of mechanical solidarity, and failed to develop anything like the needed distinction between collective and noncollective goods. See Parson's fascinating but flawed article on "Durkheim's Contribution to the Theory of Integration of Social Systems," in Kurt H. Wolff, ed., *Essays in Sociology and Philosophy* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1964), pp. 118–153, especially where it distinguishes values, differentiated norms, collective attitudes, and roles. See also his *Structure of Social Action* (2nd ed.; New York: The Free Press, 1949), pp. 301–342, and Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society*, trans. George Simpson (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1947).

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"social report," for they provide alternative standards by which to gauge a nation's advance or decline.

My use of the words "ideal society" may, however, create some misunderstandings. Neither economists nor Parsonian sociologists are normally utopians; they do not necessarily believe that their "ideal societies" can be achieved. The purposes these ideal conceptions serve are entirely different from those of, say, the utopian socialists, or of Plato's vision of an ideally just state run by philosopher-kings. They serve, not usually as visions of what we can and should obtain, but rather as intellectual models that can clarify and help to indicate whether a given policy leads in a desirable or undesirable direction. Some misunderstanding may also be caused by the fact that, while the economist's conception of the "ideal society" is at times almost explicit, the particular sociological conception I have in mind receives only tacit recognition. But this difference in the degree of explicitness of the ideal conception does not mean that the one ideal is necessarily more influential or important than the other, so we must strip these two ideal conceptions of their very different clothing and then set them out in a way that will facilitate explicit comparison.

One part of the economic ideal has already been set out in the literature of welfare economics, which describes the necessary conditions for an "efficient" and "optimal" allocation of resources, so there is no need for a rigorous statement of it here. Roughly speaking, a society with given resources and state of technology can be described as efficient if it is "at the frontier of every production possibility function," which means in plainer English that no more of any good can be obtained without giving up some amount of some other good (including leisure and future consumption as goods, to subsume the possibility that more resources would be devoted to production). *Efficiency* says nothing about whether the goods that are produced are those that would provide the most satisfaction, so it is not a sufficient condition for *optimality*. A necessary condition for an optimal allocation of resources is that no reallocation could be made which would make anyone better off without making someone else worse off. The standard of optimality is then the concept of Pareto-optimality mentioned earlier, and Pareto-optimality is not achieved unless the society is *also* efficient.

The society will not, of course, be economically ideal unless the distribution of income is right, and the "just" distribution of income cannot be scientifically determined. The constructs of welfare economics nonetheless can claim general interest, for they describe necessary conditions that would have to prevail if an economy were to be optimal, *whatever* the ideal distribution of income might be. The necessary conditions for Pareto-optimality in a society are stated principally in terms of a series of marginal conditions. These

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marginal conditions, and the many shortcomings in this sort of analysis, will not be discussed here, since this paragraph is meant to be only impressionistic, and because the welfare economics texts that set out this analysis more carefully are easily accessible.

Welfare economics is static in that it leaves innovation and the advance of technology out of account. Economists have done a great deal of work lately on innovation and on the economics of education and research, but this has not usually been explicitly tied in with welfare economics. In the rough and ready fashion in which we are operating at the moment, this can perhaps be done. In essence, the economically ideal society would maintain a Pareto-optimal allocation of resources at every moment in time *and* at the same time continually change to the best attainable production functions as knowledge advances. The rate of accumulation of productive knowledge and other forms of capital would be the maximum consistent with the society's rate of discount of future versus present consumption. This statement, alas, brushes over a number of unsettled issues (such as the possible Schumpeterian conflict between short-run allocative efficiency and long-run innovation) and many profound complexities (involving particularly what the economists call "optimal growth" theory). But hopefully the subsequent discussion will reveal that these complications are not so important for the very particular purpose of the moment. That purpose is to suggest that most economists have some fairly clear but incomplete models from welfare economics, and some vaguer notions about the importance of rapid innovation, which can be taken to represent something in the nature of a vision of an economically ideal or optimal society. This vision derives from the elemental goal of maximum income, which demands an optimal allocation of resources at each moment in time plus a dynamic technology. This vision is an ideal in the sense that (vexing problems of "second best" solutions notwithstanding) it serves as a standard which economists use to help them judge practical policies.

The "ideal" society in sociology

The school of sociology considered in this paper does not contain any models of "optimality" that parallel the constructs of welfare economics. But there is probably implicit in it a vision of something like an ideal society, which ideal would serve heuristic purposes and influence judgments about public policy. This implicit ideal might be more easily evident in the literature on "mass movements" than in Professor Parsons' own writings, but it is also evident to some degree in his works. The sort of sociological ideal at issue is, moreover, far too complex and comprehensive to be susceptible to brief summary. It is the result not only of extensive theoretical writing, but also of

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subtle insights that have emerged from many lifetimes of empirical research.

But perhaps the most basic dimension is that ideal can be mentioned, if not precisely defined. That dimension is "alienation." However much they differ in other respects, a whole family of sociological studies unite in treating alienation, or some similar psychological estrangement, as the principal sociological pathology. To say that the minimization of alienation plays a role in many sociological studies not unlike the maximization of satisfaction (or utility) in economics is to enumerate a half-truth—a statement that makes those who believe in the other half angry. Yet it is a half-truth that, because it refers to a part of the truth that has been neglected, should now be emphasized.

Though the minimization of alienation is in a sense the most fundamental variable in this particular sociological ideal, it is not perhaps the most important, or at any event the most often discussed in the theoretical literature. The degree of "integration" of a society is probably even more central, and the ideal is that this degree of integration should be maximized. The degree of integration, or "institutional integration," as it is more carefully called, is important not only because it affects the amount of alienation, but also because it affects in other ways the chances that the society will cohere.

The degree of integration tends to increase with the extent to which a set of individuals forms a "community," and would be nil in a situation in which a set of individuals had no social structure, common values, or institutions. It would be high in a situation in which everyone in a society has tied into the social order by bonds to a wide variety of associations, in which social structure was elaborate, in which common values, norms, and institutions were cherished, where individual roles were well understood, and where mechanisms of social control were well developed. The number and degree of group associations and affiliations, and the degree to which behavior is institutionalized, or organized, structured, and regularized, tends to be a very high, if not indeed at a maximum level, in this ideal society. It is not only the extent of group association and institutionalization that is emphasized, but also its mutual consistency and stability. If the demands or values of different groups or associations with overlapping memberships or objectives are incompatible, and different people have conflicting expectations about what people with particular roles should do, then the degree of integration is limited and the possibility of societal disintegration increased.

It may be possible to give an impression of this ideal type with some examples. Many of the sociologists whom Parsons has influenced give a great deal of emphasis to "voluntary" associations and other "intermediate" groups (organizations smaller than the state).

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This is especially true of the literature on the causes of what sociologists call "mass movements," and Professor Parsons has aptly said this literature constitutes a "new pluralism." There are many relevant types of intermediate groups, but perhaps the professional association, the labor union, and the organized pressure group are the leading examples. The professional association is perhaps most important of all. Some of these who share the Parsonian perspective think all types of economic life should be organized the way a profession such as medicine is organized, with a powerful guild organization and a pervasive occupational ethic controlling each industry. To be sure, this idea got most of its strongest support before the Parsonian school began—it was urged by Emile Durkheim, R. H. Tawney, the guild sociologists, some syndicalists, and by some advocates of a corporate or Fascist state. But the systematic conceptions needed to justify a system of economic organization modeled on the professions was developed by Professor Parsons, and he has repeatedly emphasized the functions that professional ethics, institutions, and associations perform.

The labor union and the organized pressure groups have also received special attention. One of the most interesting assertions in this literature is that labor unions, and perhaps even Marxian labor unions, may reduce the chances of a revolution in a modern society, because the labor union, however radical its ideology may initially have been, will provide a source of group participation for many workers, and the sense of belonging or group participation that results may reduce alienation and thereby the desire to overthrow the social order. There is perhaps also a tendency to emphasize the sense of group identity and the feeling of participation fostered by a pressure group rather than its practical impact in the political system. In the sociological conception, it would probably be a necessary condition for an ideal society that there be many groups of the sort we have just discussed.

There will be objections that this ideal is unsatisfactory in its own terms, quite apart from the merits of other types of ideal societies that may be imagined. Many people—probably even some of those who have contributed to the dissemination of this ideal—would say that they personally prefer unstructured and mainly unorganized, if not disorganized, societies. Many of us love ill-defined roles and feel confined by extensive associational networks. A new generation of sociologists, mindful of Marx, emphasizes the inevitability—or even desirability—of social conflict, and thus has only contempt for the Parsonian prediction of consensus. Many people who look at the literature on group participation would agree that more attention ought to be given to the *impact* or share of power that organizational membership can bring, and less to the fact of belonging per se. But the disadvantages of the sociological

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ideal described, and the impressionism and injustice of this brief and selective description of it, are not so important for the special purpose of the moment, which is to show how economic theory and a prevalent type of sociological theory can lead to conflicting conclusions.

Ideals into nightmares

The point is that *the economic and sociological ideals described are not only different, but polar opposites: if either one were attained, the society would be a nightmare in terms of the other.* There are no doubt many social arrangements so inept that society is inside what the economist would call the production possibility frontier; that is, in a situation where it could get closer to either the economic or the sociological ideal without getting further from the other. An example of this would be a society with total anarchy, in which a step taken to promote integration, such as the establishment of a government that created law and order, would bring both the economic and the sociological ideals nearer. But these positions that are inferior by both standards are not very interesting. The important question is how much of the one ideal to give up in order to get more of the other when you can't get more of both. This is an important matter, for in terms of the values of most people I know (whatever their disciplinary backgrounds), there is profound merit in both ideals. The economic and sociological ideals, far from both being destroyed by their contradiction with one another, are in fact expressions of the most fundamental alternatives human societies face. The fact that most of us want to choose compromise positions between these polar ideals does not negate their value as intellectual constructs that can give us a clearer understanding of the implications of a marginal move in one direction or another.

The fundamental character of the conflict between these two ideals may not, however, be immediately evident, so we must first show how one ideal prevents the achievement of the other. The economic ideal required that there be an optimal allocation of resources at any moment in time and rapid innovation over time. An optimal allocation of resources requires that a series of marginal conditions be satisfied throughout the society; the marginal rates of substitution of any two factors of production must be proportional to the ratio of their prices and the same in all employments, and so on. But if there is rapid growth, the demands for different goods, the methods of production, the location of production, and the marginal products of particular factors of production will change incessantly. A Pareto-optimal allocation of resources will therefore require *constant reallocations of resources.* This will mean that

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factors of production, including labor, must frequently move from firm to firm, industry to industry, and place to place.[3] Since methods of production are rapidly changing, the same *combinations* of labor and other resources won't be needed very long: new *groupings* of workers are needed as the economy changes. This means that individual mobility is normally required, and this in turn means that the rewards of the incentive system must be offered on an individual basis.

Rapid change and growth in an economy means great gains in one area and vast losses in another, for incentives are needed to induce the needed mobility of labor and capital, and the changing pattern of incentives means many *nouveaux riches* and *nouveaux pauvres*. Both social and geographical mobility are at a maximum in the economically "ideal" society, and there can be few if any stable group relationships, apart from those in a nuclear family in which *only one* member is in the labor force. There can be no group loyalties or organizational constraints that limit individual mobility in response to changing incentives. There can be no organizations or other mechanisms that give those whose legitimate expectations are frustrated by the pattern of change the power to defend their interests, for this will (except where normally infeasible "lump sum" transfers can be arranged) pervert the pattern of incentives needed to bring about the resource reallocation which is entailed by the economic ideal. No group with a role in the productive process can restrict mobility by regulating entry, giving privilege for seniority, or "featherbedding."

I have elsewhere discussed some aspects of the relationship between rapid economic growth and social and political stability in more detail,[4] so there should be no need to spell out the argument here. It should in any event already be evident that the society that enjoys the benefits of the economic ideal will, because of the magnitude of social and geographic mobility and the dearth of stable group relationships, for that very reason be one in which individuals are constantly uprooted and in which alienation is probably at a maximum. The rapid change will also work against stable institutions and ethical norms. Moreover, the plurality of intermediate organizations, such as professional associations, labor unions, cartels, and lobbying organizations, which the sociological ideal cherishes,

[3] It is logically possible that reallocations of resources could be constant, but the rate of reallocation might still be so slow that social costs were small. Only those with a wanderlust, or the young adults who are leaving their parents' homes anyway, would then have to move. Rates of economic growth that are rapid by modern standards could, however, require much faster reallocations than could be handled in this way if the marginal conditions necessary for complete economic efficiency are to be satisfied at all times.

[4] "Rapid Growth as a Destabilizing Force," *Journal of Economic History*, XXIII (December 1963), 529–552.

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cannot be allowed, for such organizations, by defending the *group* interests of their clients through the political system, by limiting entry or exit, or by preventing the adoption of new methods of production, would prevent the maximum growth which the economically ideal system will by definition achieve.

It should similarly be obvious that, *when the particular sociological ideal at issue has been achieved, the society will tend to become economically stagnant.* The guild-like institutional integration and regulation that is inherent in the sociological ideal tends to prevent change (just as the medieval guilds did). Without change, there can be no growth, so that the "professionalization" of economic life is one of the surest ways to prevent economic advance. The familiar argument that the Parsonian sociological tradition has a conservative bias turns out to be an heroic understatement when the economic aspect is considered, for the minimization of stress, alienation, and the elaboration and integration of institutions that it involves will tend to prevent economic even more than political change—and opposition even to economic change is indeed conservative! But this ideal must nonetheless not be belittled—its importance is evident whenever we examine the implications of its opposite.

At the most general level, what has been said is that the typical individual's need for some degree of stability in group relationships, and therefore also some institutional stability, can in a wide range of situations work against the maximum attainment of all other individual objectives. To put it another way, the continuous reallocations and rearrangements that are needed to satisfy maximally all of our other individual wants (be they material or not) is not usually consistent with the stable or enduring interpersonal relationships that most people apparently value and need. The ideal situation, interpersonal relationships aside, has been stated, in part explicitly, by economists. A set of ideal arrangements for group interaction, all other things aside, has been described, albeit implicitly, by sociologists. There are many ambiguities and shortcomings in both of these ideals, and even greater failings in my hurried vulgarizations of them, but it surely cannot be denied that it is often important to keep something like both of these polar cases in mind.[5]

These polar cases are not, however, always kept in mind in

[5] It might be supposed that even the desire for stable interpersonal relationships can be subsumed under the economic mode of analysis, thereby allowing a clear delineation of a single, comprehensive ideal. The society must "trade off" stable group relationships with the other things it wants, and accordingly needs some conception of an "ideal compromise." Unfortunately, the economist's tools of thought are not well adapted to dealing with situations in which different individuals' wants are highly interdependent (as they are when they cherish given group relationships) and economists have not usually studied this aspect of reality. Thus, in practice, there is still the need to keep both ideals in mind.

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scholarly discussions, for each of them is monopolized by a different discipline. This has greatly hindered intellectual advance in the study of such topics as the labor union or foreign aid. It has also made it more difficult to develop methods for helping the country answer questions such as "what is the socially optimal rate of migration of Negroes from the rural South to the urban North?" It also presents a special challenge for a social report, since a social report which keeps only one or the other of these ideals in mind could mislead a nation about some of its profound problems. *The choice of a position along the continuum between the economic and the sociological ideals must be made by the political system.* But scholars fail to do their duty if they do not help a society understand the implications of alternative choices.

Social reality as a whole

All of this argument brings us back to the original thesis: it is futile to attempt to determine the division of labor between social science disciplines in terms of the objects they are supposed to consider. Reality cannot be divided into departments the way universities are, and no logically defensible division of subject matters is possible. The various disciplines are, however, distinguished by their prejudices and their methods. Economics, sociology, psychology, and political science must therefore be whatever economists, sociologists, psychologists, or political scientists do, or rather what they do best. But that can't be definitely determined before each discipline has tried to solve whatever problem is at issue. Therefore we should hope for a great deal of disciplinary overlap so that every problem that might benefit will, if the available resources permit, get the attention of scholars with different attitudes and methodologies.

If the spheres of the separate social sciences cannot properly be defined in terms of the nature of the reality studied, we can also conclude that a government should not in general seek advice about one segment of reality from only one discipline, and advice about some other segment of reality only from another discipline. We should not be surprised that the economic approach embodied in the Planning-Programming-Budgeting System can improve social programs. We should not be surprised when sociologists, psychologists, and political scientists contribute to the study of poverty, or business organization, or labor unions. Above all, we should conceive of any social report in multidisciplinary terms: all of the social science disciplines must be exploited if such a report is to achieve its full potential.

The division of emphasis between the Economic Report and a social report might pragmatically be determined in keeping with the Council of Economic Advisers' traditional and proper preoccupa-

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tion with "macroeconomic" questions—the problems of recession and inflation, or the fluctuation of the market sector as a whole. "Microeconomic" questions—those that relate to particular sectors and groups—and "social" problems have not been given much attention in the Economic Report, or in any major government document. There is accordingly a need for the systematic public assessment of these problems, and this need suggests that a multidisciplinary social report could be quite useful.

A final conclusion is that the need for interdisciplinary communication and collaboration is even more urgent than it is usually said to be. If the argument of this article is correct, such communication and collaboration is essential to assure that all competing explanations of a particular phenomena are debated and compared, and to assure that society makes an informed compromise between the polarized ideals cherished by different disciplines. Yet interdisciplinary undertakings become steadily more difficult, as the scholarly market grows larger and the house of intellect expands. The very advance of scholarship can make it more difficult to see not only social science, but also social reality, as a whole.

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DISCUSSION

I. The Gap Is Not Technological

THEODORE LEVITT

THE curious thing about many discussions of the alleged technological gap between Europe and the United States is how little they actually say about technology. There is a sharp focus on science and the brain drain; technology gets only derivative attention. Nothing is more characteristic of this curious habit than Robert Gilpin's article in *The Public Interest*, No. 10 (Winter 1968). Its title was "European Disunion and the Technology Gap." The analysis dwelt almost entirely on science. The result was predictably and gravely incorrect conclusions.

Europe does indeed suffer from a technological gap. But it is not, as Professor Gilpin suggests, the result of a lack either of scientific brains or scientific accomplishments; nor is it the consequence of the fragmented character of European markets. It is the latter that Professor Gilpin holds most directly responsible for the trouble.

He asserts that the minuscule size of European national markets cannot support enterprises of sufficient scale to enable them to employ the brains which are needed for the basic research that produces the technology capable of competing with America's might. Cooperative efforts by European nations are not encouraging because of "the conflicts of interest and perspective which continue to divide the Europeans among themselves . . ." There is, in his words, no proper "institutional framework" for the kind of cooperation that can sponsor the kind of effective basic research necessary for Europe's economic survival. The result is a massive "brain drain" to the United States, which as a consequence vaults that much further ahead. If the brains could somehow be kept in Europe and profitably employed in basic research, the problem would disappear.

Professor Gilpin's argument is superficially plausible. But it is also very misleading.

Mr. Gilpin writes about R & D—research and development—as if the two were the same thing. They are not. And he writes about brains as if the mere production of knowledge were equivalent to its commercial implementation. It is not. People who have studied business enterprise from the inside—or indeed who have studied any kind of organization from the inside—know that things are much differ-

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ent. Research and development are not synonymous. Research deals with getting ideas and knowledge, development with their effective commercial utilization. The difference is similar and related to the difference between creativity and innovation. Creativity is thinking things up. Innovation is getting things done.

Europe's problem, and specifically the problem in France, England, and to a lesser extent Germany and Italy, is innovation, not creativity; it is translating scientific discoveries into market-oriented enterprises, not producing the discoveries themselves. For neither of these activities is the limited size of European markets disabling.

THE logic is simple enough, and the facts support it. If we are talking about the production of useful new things, as Professor Gilpin clearly is, then the available markets are incontestably worldwide, not national or even European. If what has been discovered and produced is usefully new, the world is the producer's oyster, not Belgium or England or whatever the nationality of the discovering firm. If the market is worldwide, then the incentives are as adequate for a Swiss firm as for an American one. When Montecatini of Italy developed polypropylene in the late 1950's, it had not the slightest difficulty selling it in the United States. Indeed, it built a successful American plant right off. For it to have tried at that time to sell a mature product such as nylon in the United States would have been almost impossible. But polypropylene, being new, was easy. Montecatini held its position even after Phillips Petroleum, du Pont, Firestone, and others (often using Montecatini's patents) entered the race.

To suggest that European markets are too small to support the research which creates new knowledge is, furthermore, to ignore the remarkable example of Japan. Between 1951 and 1965, patents issued to their own nationals by Belgium, France, West Germany, the United Kingdom, and Sweden declined from 42,616 to 28,085 annually. At the same time, Japanese patents issued to Japanese nationals rose from 4,350 to 17,797. Clearly, something more than size of nation or of domestic markets accounts for this difference. Professor Gilpin talks about the primal importance of military weapons in the science race, as if these automatically produce the big private-sector fallout that is said to keep America ahead. Yet Japan has no military establishment at all to speak of, while even Germany has a large and thriving one, not to speak of England and France. Moreover, it would be hard to attribute as much as 1 per cent of America's Gross National Product to the private-sector fallout of aerospace or military science.

Professor Gilpin refers in one fleeting sentence to arguments that Europe's gap is managerial, not technological. And that is all we hear of it. The remaining discussion builds on a deep prejudice in favor of the idea that scientific brains are central and that these require big companies with big markets.

Anyone who has looked carefully at European enterprise can recite horrendous tales suggesting the opposite. The basis of Japan's recent economic growth is its competitive international spirit. Japanese

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businessmen who visit America in such abundance visit, not its R & D departments, but its manufacturing plants and product development departments—not the managers of Huntsville's laboratories, but the managers of Huntington's shopping plazas. They seek not so much new scientific knowledge as commercial applications of knowledge; not newness as such, but commercial opportunity. Japan's thriving success, to the extent that it is based on technology, is heavily based on that country's commercial exploitation of scientific and technological knowledge spawned elsewhere. The Japanese have no hesitation about imitating others or improving on what others have done. It is not even innovation that characterizes their art, but inspired and commercially viable imitation.

THE fact that the creation of new knowledge is not essential to, or a guarantee of, economic success can be demonstrated in Europe itself. In the aerospace and other high-technology areas, during recent years, Europe's record is far from the consistent lag that is so commonly depicted. The swing-wing plane and the hovercraft were initially developed in Europe. Laser technology and cryogenics came from Europe. Most of the underlying inventions for the office copying machine industry were European. The basic work in fluidics and holography was European.

Yet, in each of these it was in the United States that the translation of this creativity into commercially viable innovation occurred. Europe was the creator, America the innovator. It is not scientific brains that Europe lacks; it is entrepreneurial brawn. It is not an inability to support basic research; it is an inability to get moving. There is, moreover, the corrosive presence of an almost ideological antipathy to the commercialization of knowledge. It is okay and even prestigious to work at science and the creation of new scientific knowledge. To exploit it commercially is vulgar—perhaps okay only for the American barbarians.

In much of Europe, commerce is not a valued or even a fully respectable occupation. It is no accident that the public knows so little about who Europe's industrial leaders really are. In the United States, the leaders of industry make front-page news. In Europe, they hide almost pensively behind a carefully cultivated screen of anonymity. They do not hide because of any fear of verbal outpourings of socialists and reformers. They hide because business is still deemed to be somehow undignified. When they do talk in public, they take great pains to demonstrate their civility by talking about their enormous interest in art, music, and the ballet. Most American executives freely state that their work is their hobby.

This illegitimacy of commerce accounts for some spectacular failures in the recent annals of European enterprise. Several European firms pioneered in the development of ingenious magnetic-tape control devices for machine tools. They concentrated on developing and finally producing exceedingly high-precision products far superior to any available elsewhere. And, of course, high precision meant high cost. A United States firm came along later, doing from the

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beginning what the Europeans had not done at all. It made careful studies of the needs of the market and discovered that considerably larger tolerances were acceptable. It proceeded to produce lesser-precision control devices at lesser costs. Predictably, it has taken the bulk of the European market away from the original European producers.

It is the European executive's contempt for the realities of the market that accounts in large measure for Europe's problems. He does not study the market's needs in detail because the market is the rabble. The European executive operates on Ralph Waldo Emerson's immensely misleading advice to "make a better mousetrap, and the world will beat a path to your door." The advice is misleading because it focuses on the wrong issue. The issue is not to know that people will respond to a better product; it is to know what they define "better" to be.

One needs not only to do what the market requires, but also to do it well. This requires a kind of managerial dedication that often repels Europeans. Somehow, many European executives feel that business is simply not worthy of their best efforts, that business is simply not important enough to get all that excited about. You work at your job, but save your best energies for after work. Some years ago Britain developed the world's first fast all-weather military interceptor aircraft, the Javelin. The United States Department of Defense literally drooled. It would have bought all that Britain could produce. Even France stood in line. Britain was at least three years ahead of any other developer. But no benefit accrued to Britain —it was unable to manage the complex on-line production job to make adequate deliveries. The deficiency was not scientific brains; it was management talent and a proper sense of urgency.

THERE is no doubting the enormous importance in today's world of science. But whether modern science is all that important for economic growth and competitive strength is not so certain. A quick tour of any department store, any supermarket, any office, or any factory quickly shows that electronics, biophysics, cryogenics, and optics constitute a minuscule part of even America's vaunted economic power or resources. To say that there is a lag in these areas that accounts for European's problems is to focus on our own biases. We dismiss almost with contempt the vital importance to our economic vigor of the headache remedies and detergents whose advertisements we so much abhor. Yet the enormous, if seemingly obtrusive and vulgar, effort that sustains headache remedies, detergents, false eyelashes, bucket seats, and electric pencil sharpeners is central to America's success. It is great entrepreneurial energy, managerial effort, and involved preoccupation with the consumer's motivations and needs that distinguishes American from European business enterprise. Science is what makes news, especially among men who prefer brains to brawn. But science and advanced technology are not what primarily make the American economy run so fast and well.

An American company engaged in a joint venture with a French

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company in the production and delivery of ready-mix cement spent the greater part of its effort trying to persuade its partner of the importance of such seemingly trivial matters as making deliveries on time. Moreover, several months were consumed trying to persuade the French partner of the importance of planning truck routes carefully so as to increase the number of daily deliveries per vehicle, rather than trying to solve its cost-price squeeze by getting its competitors to agree to a price rise. A large German company in the ceramics business lost a lucrative American contract by its persistent failure to meet delivery dates, even after several German reassurances that it would not happen again. The Leica camera, for years the world's standard of quality, has fared badly, not because it has fallen behind scientifically, but because of the opposite. It refused to yield to the increasing convenience-orientation of the market place. Leica's self-assured and unbending attitudes defined a "better" camera differently from the way the market place defined it. Like the numerical control producer, it overengineered the product to the insular high-cost specifications of people accustomed to having their clothes tailor-made at the best shops.

This same distaste for the practical facts of the world to which they must address their efforts characterizes management methods in much of Europe. It is not enough to produce excellent products. One must produce the right products, at the right price, and engage in the right marketing efforts. But marketing is not a respectable word in many European companies. Employees engaged in marketing are viewed as a lesser breed—the chaps responsible for all that vulgar advertising and expense account wining. They give business a bad name. Marketing men are now grudgingly admitted into the enterprise, but are given little say and are seldom invited into the upper echelons or to the upper clubs. As a consequence, no really bright, promising, self-respecting young man willingly enters the marketing sector of a business. There is thus a selective breeding of mediocrity in the very sector of the business where brightness is, for European companies, most urgently needed. Hence, the solidly respectable men at the top who make vital decisions about product design, about market opportunities, about how much is to be spent for product and market development often make these decisions inside a sealed continuum. They get no reliable information from the market place or the people who are closest to it. Their companies are really organized *against* the market. They seal off from positions of influence the men who are likely to know most about the market.

THE most frustrated and disillusioned men in Europe today are the able men who are aware of, and confined by, the artificial organizational barriers and practices that keep them from helping their companies be more successful. Britain has a particularly large and growing group of such men. To their enormous credit they are hanging on, sacrificing themselves to the day when the barriers will finally crumble. And they are crumbling, but not at a pace commensurate with the implacable demands of the competitive environment.

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This group is crumbling only as the men at the top literally die off.

A genuine European economic community will certainly help European firms compete, and for the reasons that Professor Gilpin in part mentions. But until we look at what actually happens inside the typical European enterprise, we cannot appreciate fully what is distinctive about America's success. Product planning is almost nonexistent in Europe. Hardly a company has anything such as profit planning, market plans, market research, formal capital budgeting, or financial control systems. Manufacturing departments often operate like autonomous kingdoms, independent of, and sometimes at war with, their marketing departments. Owing in part to the double bookkeeping practices that systematic tax evasion has institutionalized in many European firms, and in part to ancient practices of secrecy designed to prevent even key employees from knowing how well their companies are doing, plant managers often have no idea what their real costs are, division managers have no idea of their profit contributions, and sales vice presidents cannot know which products to emphasize because they are not told of the profitability of their various products.

All this might have been very well thirty years ago. But American companies now plan, organize, control, budget, research the market, and work against profit and cost standards. There is a discipline and sense of purpose, an orientation to market opportunities that is alien in much of Europe. America's edge over Europe resides not in its possession of greater technical or scientific knowledge, but rather in its greater knowledge about the market and its greater commitment to the idea of a business system whose job is to serve the market.

The gap is not technological, not brains, and certainly not money. Europe does not need new scientific knowledge. It needs a new spirit, led by a new generation of business managers, to capitalize on the knowledge that is abundantly available.

II. Of Course the Gap's Not Really Technological

ROBERT GILPIN

THEODORE Levitt's basic point, that the technology gap between the United States and Europe is really a management gap, brings to mind the polemic of certain Black Power spokesmen that the America's race problem is really not a Negro problem but a white problem. Of course the gap is managerial. It is also educational, organizational, and attitudinal. But it is even more than all these separate elements which different authors have chosen to stress.

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The "gap" is one between two very different cultures which for the first time in history have come into very intimate contact. The term "technology gap" is really a symbolic representation of the whole spectrum of challenges posed by a dynamic, expanding, and socially democratic society for conservative societies ruled by traditional elites wanting the power that science and technology can bring, but unwilling to pay the price of a profound social-economic transformation.

In my article I sought to stress one element of the price that the Europeans must pay to improve their technical and economic position, namely the diminution of divisive national rivalries and the achievement of a unified European effort in scientific, technological, and economic matters. Mr. Levitt has kindly supplemented my analysis by pointing out the important contribution managerial attitudes play in Europe's failure to exploit Europe's own creative capacities. Other contributors to this discussion might focus on Europe's fragmented and laggard capital market, Europe's archaic educational structure, or Europe's conservative social institutions. These additional aspects of Europe's problem were quite consciously left out of my analysis, although in my *France in the Age of the Scientific State,*[1] upon which my article was based, I seek to give all these other elements their due.

Actually I have no quarrel with most of Mr. Levitt's analysis. I willingly concede, for example, that science-based technologies such as electronics are a minuscule part of our economy and even that detergents and false eyelashes are of vital importance to our economic vigor. I grant, too, that many of the most important technologies of the post-war period (though not all that he mentions) were of European origin; it is American businesses that have had the managerial skill and financial resources to turn these European ideas into marketable products. Where I would take issue with him is over the significance of the facts on which we both tend to agree.

What distresses Europeans is the electronics gap and not the eyebrow pencil gap. They fret over their inability to turn their scientific ideas into technical products and envy the American success in converting European ideas into technologies of economic and military significance. Rightly or wrongly, they are afraid of the growing role of huge American corporations in the European market and wonder whether they will be converted to some sort of economic dependence on the United States.

The point is that the technology gap is much less an economic than a political problem. This is true in several senses. In the first place, what is at issue for Europeans is their political position vis-à-vis the great powers and their capacity for long-term national independence. Whereas, beginning in the latter part of the nineteenth century, control over petroleum resources became essential once naval ships shifted from sail to diesel, so today an independent aerospace and electronics industry, along with the supporting

[1] Princeton University Press, 1968.

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sciences, is seen to be crucial for a nation to enjoy diplomatic and military freedom of action.

Second, the intensity of the European reaction to the technology gap must be understood in the context of the profound economic and political developments which have engulfed western Europe since the end of World War II. The European socioeconomic political structure has been buffeted and the European economy has been overstimulated by a number of converging forces. First, there has been the trauma for France, Great Britain, and several other European countries of decolonization; seldom in history have proud and ruling peoples been reduced to second-class status so fast. Second, for the first time in history the political and industrial leaders of western Europe have experienced and must come to terms with a full-employment market economy; this fact has set in motion a series of economic consequences which are transforming the traditional ways of European life. Labor is now able to make its wage demands effective; high wages in turn have put a squeeze on profit margins, and industrialists are forced to learn new ways in order to become efficient and competitive.

On top of these developments, western European leaders face the challenge of increased competition from their neighbors, as trade barriers are lowered among the Common Market countries, and, in response to the emergence of a mass market in Europe, large American corporations have entered the economic fray. In part, because they seem to aggravate an already difficult situation; in part, because they accept the market economy and cartelization is not in their interests; and in part, because nationalistic sentiments can easily be stirred up against them—for all these reasons American corporations operating in Europe can easily serve as a scapegoat for Europe's social and economic problems. In short, the "technology gap" provides a simple explanation of the very complex and far-reaching forces shaking the foundations of traditional Europe.

TRACING the source of European concerns over the technology gap and United States economic penetration of Europe to its psychological roots, however, is no substitute for an examination of the real or groundless nature of the European fears. If forced to specify their fears, thoughtful Europeans identify three dangers in the present trends. In the first place, these Europeans fear that American direct investment in Europe in all economic sectors could reach such a level that the essential decisions affecting the European economy are made in the United States. Second, they fear that American control of the defense-related industries may become of such a scale that individual European countries will lose their freedom of diplomatic action. And, third, they see developing an Atlantic division of labor and continual brain drain which will deprive European countries of their capacity for autonomous innovation.

Even for the French these dangers, except in a few sectors such as computers, are not yet of serious proportions. Though American

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firms in Europe have on several occasions taken unpopular decisions, they are frequently more responsive to the policies of host governments than are indigenous firms, and with a few exceptions in the defense-related areas, American firms in Europe have conducted their business independently of the foreign policy of the United States. It is rather the long-term consequences of present trends that disturb French and other European leaders.

To meet these challenges there are essentially three strategies which European countries can follow. The first is the strategy of following in the footsteps of the United States and seeking to overcome its considerable lead across a broad front of basic research and technological development. A second strategy is to select specific areas in the advanced fields of science and technology which could be seen to be important for the future development of national and industrial strength, and to concentrate R & D resources in these areas. A third strategy is to concentrate on a relatively narrow range of technology but to do very little basic research; instead, emphasis is placed on the purchase of selected American licenses and the concentration of indigenous technological expertise in such areas in order to develop products for subsequent export.

The first strategy is essentially that which has been selected by France. Basically, of course, prestige and military rather than economic considerations weigh heavily in this approach. The second strategy of conducting basic research and technological development in a few industrial areas has been followed by the Dutch, the Swiss, the Swedes, and increasingly the British. The third strategy of investing heavily in American licenses has been followed by the Japanese in achieving their amazing record of growth and success in world trade.

The underlying assumption of my article is that, for the Common Market countries, the ultimate success of each of these strategies is dependent upon a considerable degree of unity. The strategy of following in the footsteps of the United States poses an overwhelming challenge for the medium-sized nations of western Europe. It means a scattering of scarce resources across a broad front of scientific research and development, with little prospect of an economic (in contrast to a political or military) return. The effort thus far to overcome this size problem through European cooperation has come apart on the rocks of the conflicting national interests and the differing ambitions of the European states themselves.

The idea that each European nation should pursue the strategy adopted by Sweden, and concentrate on specific scientific-technical areas selected on the basis of commercial criteria, would appear to be a wise course from an economic standpoint. Certainly it is the direction in which countries such as Holland, Belgium, and Italy have moved. But this strategy doubtless necessitates an abandonment of any pretensions to exercising an important political role in the world, and for western Europe it undoubtedly means acceptance of a large measure of political, economic, and of course military dependence on the United States. A nation with memories of great-

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ness and fears of abandonment, France, has rejected this strategy. The two former great powers of western Europe, Great Britain and West Germany, have yet to decide whether they will accept the role of another Sweden.

The strategy perfected by Japan, of building an industrial base and export trade utilizing American licenses, is not seriously entertained in Europe. Though West Germany has relied heavily on American technology, this was part of a strategy of revival and cannot be presumed to be a long-term commitment. The strength of the German scientific-technical traditions, the new openness of Germany to outside competition, and the dormant yet unquenched longing for national reunification lead one to conclude that Germany has yet to decide which strategy to follow. Furthermore, even Japan, as she seeks to forge a more independent role for herself in the world, is moving away from this strategy and is strengthening her own scientific-technical capabilities.

WHICHEVER strategy individual European states may seek to follow, the choice for the Europe of the Six is either to create the conditions to achieve competitive efficiency in European industries or to revert to protectionism. Only in choosing the first course can European governments meet the American challenge through the achievement of efficient economies of scale—a large market, large corporations, and a large volume of goods—which would satisfy the rising expectations of the European people and keep Europe competitive in world markets. Equally significant, Europe needs American capital, management, and technology if it is to meet these demands. From this perspective, the movement of American industry into Europe is in part a technological Marshall Plan which has stimulated the European economy and has actually operated to lessen the long-standing American technical advantage over Europe in many areas of international trade.

Unfortunately, as I pointed out in my article, the trend throughout Europe is toward restrictive practices that limit the achievement of economies of scale. The "nationalization" of advanced technological industries through government contracts and purchasing policies, the concentration of industry and organization of markets along national lines, and the reappearance of the cartel mentality in response to "gluts" in various commodity sectors—electronic components, steel, man-made fibers, automobiles, chemicals, and petroleum—are indicative of this move toward economic nationalism.

But whether protection or efficiency is the course of action chosen, neither course will succeed without political unity—not necessarily the creation of a supranational state but of a unity of political wills. In practice, at the present time this means the political cooperation of France and West Germany. Together they can impose their wills on the lesser countries of the Six. Without their agreement, the Common Market cannot formulate a common response to the technology gap. But again, as my article pointed out, there is little basis to expect French-German cooperation over the

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long run. On the essential economic and political issues facing western Europe, French and German interests conflict. France is an economically self-sufficient and politically self-satisfied power interested in a closed Europe and the preservation of the territorial status quo. West Germany, on the other hand, must export outside the Six to survive and desires reunification with the Germans under Communist rule in East Germany.

In the Kennedy Round of tariff negotiations and the establishment of a European agricultural policy, these conflicting interests arose but were subordinated to the desire to preserve the Common Market, and the two nations were able to compromise their differences. Cooperation between the two has also been facilitated by reason of West Germany's exposed position vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, her commitment to integration in the democratic West, and her sensitivity over stirring memories of the Hitlerian past among her European neighbors.

One must ask, however, whether this relatively passive stance will continue to characterize West Germany if French "protectionism" and American "domination" reach a point where they threaten West Germany's economic and political interests. When this day arrives, we may witness in the twentieth century the repetition on a European scale of a process which took place in the nineteenth. We have tended to visualize European unification much as the German liberals visualized German unification prior to 1848: a horizontal and cooperative effort of equal states. Instead, western Europe may one day be unified as was Germany in 1871 by an act of will by one state. West Germany, in defense of its interests, may play the Prussia of European unification while France plays Austria. What may yet appear is a Bismarck willing to take the leading role. To forestall this, or some other undesirable event, is in my opinion the long-term political challenge that "the technology gap" poses for American foreign policy.

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COMMENT

When It Comes to the CRUNCH

GEOFFREY TAYLOR

London

FOR A brief spell after Cuba "crisis management" enjoyed a certain prestige. Nothing has come of it, and crises are still as unmanaged as ever. Thus the popular notion that foreign affairs are "just one crisis after another" could not be more ironically ill-informed. Would that they were! In fact they are several crises at the same time.

Suez-Hungary is the notorious example, but there have been many since. Khrushchev was toppled on the night of a British general election. Cyprus came on top of devaluation. Aden and Rhodesia have kept getting in each other's way. As it happens, 1967 was not a particularly bad year: Sierre Leone coup March 21, Greek coup April 21, Hong Kong takeover bid mid-May, and Middle East war June 5, with Biafra not going critical until July. It was then August 22 before the British mission in Peking was destroyed. But this orderliness came about more by accident than design. Several important crises have not yet taken place. When they come, there is no guarantee that they will not come in groups. This could well be the year of Laos-Zambia-Portugal, or Thailand-British Honduras, or West Bengal-Bahrein-Philippines-Swaziland. These are in addition to the normal run of crises (Cyprus, Congo, sterling, Middle East, Kashmir, and so on) for which allowance must be made.

As the pace of interlocking crises quickens, the strain on statesmanship may become too heavy to bear. A workable system of crisis management has thus become an urgent need. The concept put forward here as a tentative contribution to the literature is known as Crisis Uniformity Control.

The aim is not to abolish crises altogether. Crises have a functional role in international affairs, both in sublimating aggression and in relieving monotony. Often they draw attention to countries which would otherwise be forgotten. It is an old truth that the quickest way to get foreign aid is to hold a crisis. This makes it all the more important that crises not only take place, but should be seen to take place.

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CONSIDER a republic south of the Sahara, independent for, say, five years. It has denounced British aggression in Gibraltar and walked out of the WHO Assembly, but otherwise it has not cut much of a figure in the world. It decides to have an upheaval, beginning on March 1. By February 27 tanks have taken up stations. Martial music is put on tape. Mark Antony-type resignation speeches are run off. Cars begin to be overturned. Then on February 28 Russia and America launch a much graver crisis. It is too late to stop the sub-Saharan upheaval, but no one pays attention. The radio goes off the air, but is not missed. Telegrams are ignored in foreign capitals. The name of the strong man barely registers. At the end of it all, when both crises have run their course, sub-Sahara finds it has spent a great deal of money and emotional energy to no purpose. Not only did the crisis evoke no interest at the time but in retrospect it is not memorable. No wonder rancor becomes evident toward the developed world.

Crisis Uniformity Control therefore aims not to eliminate crises, but to administer them better. A few examples will show what is proposed. Assume that the East Germans want to restrict access to Berlin for a while, the French to supply Mirage IV's to Quebec, the Congolese Army to run amok, and the Flemish-speaking Belgians to burn down some schools. Each would notify Crisis Uniformity Control Headquarters (CRUNCH), which would allocate a date. Since all but one of these crises are recurrent, CRUNCH would provide for them as a matter of course in drawing up its annual schedule (but see below). Should a country not want to mount its crisis on the due date, CRUNCH would issue a notice to members deeming the crisis to have been held.

Three weeks is a fair time for a crisis, including a few days for it to peter out. This allows only seventeen crises a year. A system of weighting is therefore needed so that the graver crisis may take precedence over the less grave. With new techniques the specific gravity of a crisis can be measured with some accuracy.

Basically the gravity of a crisis is measured by multiplying the Gross National Product of the country concerned by the number of men under arms and dividing this product by the population. Its assets, in other words, are divided by its liabilities. Let us take the Republic of Tanzania and apply the formula

$$\text{s.g.} = \frac{G \times F}{P}$$

where G is the GNP in dollars, F the regular forces, and P the population (the statistics are from *The Military Balance 1966–1967* and other publications of the Institute of Strategic Studies).

Then Tanzania s.g. =

$$2{,}408{,}000{,}000 \times 1{,}800 \div 10{,}000{,}000 = 433{,}440;$$

which we approximate as 430,000 units of gravity.

At the other end of the scale United States s.g. =

$$677{,}500{,}000{,}000 \times 3{,}000{,}000 \div 196{,}000{,}000 = 10{,}370{,}000{,}000;$$

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which we approximate as 10,000,000,000 units of gravity.

These are unmanageable figures. Let us therefore simplify and say that

100,000,000 units of gravity = one thant.

A United States crisis would then have a reading of 100 thants. A Tanzanian crisis would rate 0.004 thants or 4 millithants. By applying the formula to several countries we can draw up a league table.

	THANTS		THANTS
United States	100	United Arab Republic	0.3
Russia	40	Pakistan	0.23
France	9	Thailand	0.13
United Kingdom	7	South Africa*	0.11
Italy	4	Syria	0.09
Holland	1.8	Laos	0.08
Japan	1.6	Congo	0.03
Turkey	1.1	Rhodesia*	0.008
Greece	1.0	Tanzania	0.004
Israel	0.9	Zambia	0.004
Norway	0.6	Chad	0.0009
Portugal	0.55	Mauritania	0.0008
India	0.4	Togo	0.0007

*If these figures seem surprisingly low it is probably because in times of crisis the population is even more of a liability than usual.

EVEN a crisis in one country has international significance (and is referable to CRUNCH) if it threatens a change of government or has elements of violence based on race, language, or religion. But most of the crises coming before CRUNCH will fall into one of the following categories:

1. *Confrontation*, in which there is a simple clash between states. The gravity of such a crisis is the sum of the thant ratings of the powers taking part in the clash.

2. *Mediation*. When a power offers to mediate, one-tenth of its rating is added to the gravity of the crisis. In December Greece (1.0) and Turkey (1.1) with American mediation (10) would superficially have rated 12.1 thants. In actual fact the crisis was devalued because of its frequent occurrence.

3. *Moral support*. When a power gives moral support to one side, one-tenth of its rating is added. In the Arab-Israel war Israel had 10 thants from the United States and the Arabs had 4 from the Soviet Union and 0.9 from France (other contributions have been ignored). Disregarding Arabs other than the United Arab Republic the crisis thus had a high rating of 16.1.

4. *Commitment*. When a power offers military support the whole of its rating is added to the crisis.

The solution to the problem of the sub-Saharan country which wants an internal upheaval is still somewhat rule of thumb. It is to

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allocate August and September for the use of powers with less than 0.01 thant. These would be known as the millithant months. A more serious problem is that of the crisis which, because of its repetitiousness, becomes too tedious to follow. Our system here devalues a crisis each time it occurs within a period of seven years. This means that if the first confrontation between Italy and Austria over Alto Adige (is it not time, by the way, that we had one?) rates 4.5 thants, subsequent crises would rate 0.45, 0.045, 0.0045 thants, and so on. Even with American mediation the recent Greek-Turkish crisis had a reading of only 0.0000121 thants.

CRUNCH itself will have to formulate rules for unpremeditated crises, if any, and natural disasters (Act of God = 1 megathant?) which are outside the scope of this article. CRUNCH may also wish to multiply (or divide) by an ethical constant any crisis judged to be a moral issue.

With these rules in mind, those who are interested might like to examine one or two case studies:

1. India and Pakistan arrange to fight for the Rann of Kutch. The Congo, at the same time, applies to invade Angola (which for this purpose is Portugal) and applies to CRUNCH for leave. Which takes precedence? (Remember that India and Pakistan are reinstating an old crisis.)

2. Would the overthrow of President Nasser, with Israeli moral support, be preferred to a split in the Italian coalition?

3. A Berlin crisis is due on October 1. On September 20 Laos applies for an air raid on Bangkok with Japanese mediation. Discuss.

4. What is the least country whose air space Syria must violate in order to take precedence over a third race riot at Berkeley? Would Zambian moral support make any difference to the choice of country?

5. President de Gaulle is to visit Harlem. By how many thants does Rhodesia fall short of declaring a republic?

Suggestions (on a postcard please) to CRUNCH, c/o The Foreign Office, London SW1.

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CURRENT READING

Class, "Ethnicity," and Mental Ability

Can differences in the intellectual and educational achievement of children from different ethnic groups be explained solely in terms of economic and social class? Or is there some residual (and as yet imperfectly understood) element of "ethnicity" that must be taken into account?

Susan Stodolsky and Gerald Lesser, writing in the Fall 1967 issue of the *Harvard Educational Review*, present some startling evidence which strongly suggests that ethnic group affiliation has a definite bearing on both the level and pattern of specific mental abilities. The authors tested a carefully selected sample of 320 New York City first-graders from four ethnic groups (Chinese, Jewish, Negro, Puerto Rican) for verbal skill, reasoning ability, number facility, and space conceptualization. Each ethnic group was divided into matched middle- and lower-class components and each of these was, in turn, further divided into an equal number of boys and girls. The object of the study was to determine the relative role of social class and ethnic affiliation on the level and organization of mental abilities.

The results, though unexpected, were quite unambiguous. Each ethnic group was found to be significantly different in its achievement on *each* mental ability scale. Thus Jewish children ranked first in verbal ability, followed by Negroes second, Chinese third, and Puerto Ricans fourth. But this order was markedly different when it came to space conceptualization. Here Chinese children ranked first, followed by Jewish children second, Puerto Ricans third, and Negroes fourth. Moreover, while social class position also exerted a significant influence on the level attained on each mental ability scale—especially in the case of Negro children—this was clearly not the whole story, for there were also marked ethnic variations among middle-class and lower-class children. Interestingly enough, such ethnic variations were most pronounced among lower-class children; the scores of middle-class children, whether Chinese, Jewish, Negro, or Puerto Rican, tended to be rather more alike.

Even more striking was the finding that, while "both social class and ethnic group affected the *level* of intellectual performance, . . . only ethnicity fosters the development of a different *pattern*." Thus all Chinese children, middle- and lower-class alike, exhibited a distinct ethnic pattern of mental abilities. And the same held true for every ethnic group. In each case, social class (like ethnicity) affected

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level, but not the organization, of mental abilities; lower-class children merely duplicated the pattern of their ethnic group at a lower level of performance than middle-class children.

The apparent failure of social class conditions to transcend ethnic influences was totally unexpected, for it seems to reverse the emphasis of most educational sociologists and psychologists. That is why the authors decided to repeat the same study, this time with middle- and lower-class Chinese and Negro first-graders in Boston. (They had to exclude Jewish and Puerto Rican children because they could not find a sample that would fit into their social class criteria.) In almost every respect, the results were virtually identical with those of the New York study.

But what is "ethnicity"? Is it affiliation to an ethnic group, or is it some shared system of cultural ideals that accounts for differences in the level and pattern of mental abilities among Chinese, Jewish, Negro, and Puerto Rican children? What happens when there are two distinct cultural traditions within the *same* ethnic group?

A recent study by Morris Gross, a school psychologist of the Jewish Education Committee of New York, for the Center for Urban Education sheds some interesting, though necessarily inconclusive, light on this question. Gross studied the intellectual performance and learning readiness of middle-class children from two neighboring Jewish communities in Brooklyn, one Ashkenazic (of East European descent) and the other Sephardic (of Syrian descent). These children shared the same religion, and they lived in the same neighborhood. They (and their mothers) were all native born and English was the language spoken in their homes. Moreover, they all came from middle-class families with similar social and economic characteristics.

Yet on every mental test that Gross administered the Ashkenazic children did significantly better than the Sephardic. As far as this study was concerned, at any rate, "Jews do not constitute a monolithic structure in relation to early academic preparedness or attitudes toward education." Attitudes toward education, Gross's survey of the mothers indicates, differ significantly for the two groups, with Ashkenazic parents putting greater stress on intellectual achievement and Sephardic parents emphasizing accumulation of wealth. Such differences, Gross speculates, are related to long-standing cultural ideals that have managed to survive as distinct ways of life and are transmitted as such to offspring.

Both studies show that there is apparently more to the concept of "cultural deprivation" than poverty, inadequate learning opportunities, etc. Clearly, there are many different ways in which a child may be "advantaged" or "disadvantaged," and some of these may resist the best (and worst) efforts of educators and psychologists.

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